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A

SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO.

BY JOHN STRICKER,

OF THE BALTIMORE BAR.

“Flos delibatus populi, suadæque medulla.”—*Ennius*.

BALTIMORE:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
BY LUCAS & DEEVER.
MDCCCXXXV.

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TO THE HONORABLE

EDWARD EVERETT.

SIR: The following sketch was suggested by a perusal of the learned and ingenious work of Dr. Conyers Middleton upon the great subject of which it treats. The view of Cicero it affords is essentially different from that of the Doctor, who may be called his apologist. It has been my care, however, when arriving at conclusions, unfriendly to the fame of the Roman, to accompany them with evidence, ample as I think, and principally his own.

The propriety of dedicating a work of this nature to one distinguished as a statesman, and of eminent scholarship, is obvious; and it is with pride and pleasure that I avail myself of your permission to inscribe it to you.

With the highest consideration,

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

JOHN STRICKER.

BALTIMORE, *April* 1835.

A SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
CICERO.

SECTION I.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO was born about one hundred and seven years before Christ, at Arpinum, now a decayed town called Arpino, in the kingdom of Naples, and as he himself informs us in the month of January. With regard to the rank of his family writers have not agreed. By some, it is said to have been greatly elevated; deriving lustre from royalty itself: whilst others affirm that the birth of the orator was ignoble.* In this matter, however, we are disposed to follow Cicerô's own account, by which it would seem that both are wrong.

His grandfather, he tells us, was a man of note at Arpinum, and that his spirit and conduct in the management of some corporation disputes, had attracted the notice of the consul Scaurus, who expressed a wish that he would abandon so obscure a theatre and come and act at Rome.†

* Middleton. Ad. Atticum, VII. V. it XIII. 42. Plutarch, Dio. L. 46, page 295. Silius Italicus. There have been different reasons for the name Cicero. Pliny's is thought the best; he supposes that the person who first bore it was remarkable for the cultivation of vetches, leguminous plants resembling peas: so Fabius, Lentulus and Piso, had their names from beans, tares and peas. Cicer is the latin of Vetch. Tullius from flowing streams or ducts of water, and probably derived as Middleton thinks from the ancient situation of the family at the confluence of two rivers. Pompeius Festus in voce *Tullius*. Tullus, a king of the Volsci, was the monarch from whom Cicero was said by some to have descended.

† De Legib. 2, 1. Ib. 3, 16.

His father Marcus, from whom, being the eldest born, he took that name, was a man of wisdom and learning, but seems to have been infirm of health, and to have therefore, though not without deep reluctance, foregone all attempts to rise in the State; passing the greater part of his life, at his seat, in the enjoyment, as far as might be, of leisure and elegant literature.*

Of his mother, Helvia, the orator nowhere speaks: she was however, a woman of fortune, a thrifty housewife, and of noble birth.†

The fortune of the family must have been easy, if not affluent, as on its first introduction at Rome, it took rank at once with the equestrian order in the State. That order, unlike to modern knighthood, was accessible only to men of some fortune.

Himself debarred, as we have seen, from public honors, and lamenting the long indolence of his progenitors in regard to them, Marcus was the more anxious in animating his son's ambition, and spared neither money nor pains in so instructing him, as to prepare him for the highest dignities. His paternal care was soon and well repaid; Cicero, in the progress of his studies, disclosing brilliant talents, as well as the love of glory, which may be said to have been throughout life his master passion, and the real secret of his greatness.

Intensely diligent as a student, and believing that an accomplished orator, the character he aimed at, should be able at all times, to speak soundly and elegantly upon every subject presented to him, he applied with ardor to universal learning. Assuming the manly gown and admitted to the forum, law, politics, philosophy and poetry, were each his care. In the first, he met with friendly guides in the two Scævolas, one conspicuous as a statesman, and both profoundly skilled in the laws; in philosophy he had the benefit of Grecian masters of the Epicurean, Academick and Stoick sects; whilst in poetry and polite letters, he had

*Qui cum esset infirma valetudine, hic fere ætatem egit in literis De Legib, 2. 1.

†Quintus Cicero to Tiro.

long availed himself of the lessons of Archias, a distinguished Syrian, whom he much admired, and whom in after life, he defended in an oration of exquisite polish, still extant.

With the most liberal endowments of nature, and with ambition equal to his genius, the vast superiority of this eminent Roman can furnish no surprise. It was the natural result, as well as high reward of his untiring industry and rigorous discipline. We cannot too much admire his honorable toils, and his mode of training in oratory, his darling study, is worthy of particular praise, and all imitation. We gather from his life by Middleton, that "whilst he was studying the law under the Scævolas, he spent a large share of his time in attending the pleadings at the bar, and the public speeches of the magistrates, and never passed one day without reading and writing something at home; constantly taking notes, and making comments on what he read. He was fond when very young of an exercise, recommended by some of the greatest orators before him, of reading over a part of the verses of some esteemed poet, or a part of an oration so carefully as to retain the substance of them in memory, and then deliver the same sentiments in different words, the most elegant that occurred to him. But he soon grew weary of this, upon reflecting that his authors had already employed the best words that belonged to their subject: so that if he used the same words it would do him no good, and if different would even hurt him by a habit of using worse. He applied himself therefore to another task of more certain benefit, to translate into latin, the select speeches of the best Greek orators, which gave him an opportunity of observing and employing all the most elegant words of his own language, and of enriching it at the same time with new ones borrowed, or imitated from the Greek."* In addition, the

* De Orat. 1, 5, 6, 13, 16. We avail ourselves of Dr. Middleton's Synopsis, here, as we shall sometimes do hereafter. This manner of exercise was adopted by most of the great orators of antiquity. Plutarch and Cicero tell us that Demosthenes and Hortensius had both pursued it; and it is also said, that the first was much assisted in his early attempts, by the friendly admonition and instruction of the famous comedians Satyrus, Neoptolemus and Andronicus,

company of the fair was made tributary to his improvement; selecting those whose ancestors had excelled in eloquence, or who were themselves distinguished for the refinements of language. We have often, he says in his history of famous orators, "read the letters of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, and are satisfied that her sons were not so much nurtured in their mother's lap, as in the elegance and purity of her language. I have often too enjoyed the conversation of Lælia, the daughter of Caius, and observed in her a strong tincture of her father's elegance. I have likewise conversed with her two daughters, the Muciæ, and his grand-daughters, the two Liciniæ, with one of whom, the wife of Scipio, you my Brutus have sometimes been in company." To strengthen the effect of eloquence by grace and elegance in action, he took lessons from Roscius and Æsop, the one excellent in comedy, the other in tragedy; and alive to the importance of health in the command of knowledge, his exercise was regular, and life most temperate.*

Such was the course marked out for himself: unremittingly pursued, he has left us in his works, an illustrious monument of its wisdom.

Ardent as was his desire of renown as an orator, and although in all his labors that was in constant view, he had also an eye to the high offices of State, and at the proper age, the consulship itself was the great object of his hopes. To war, the Roman empire owed much, if not all its splendor; there was no surer passport to popular favor, than success in arms; and military skill was in truth suited to the genius of the government itself. The Italick war arose when Cicero was about eighteen years of age. In this war he made a campaign with the consul Strabo, and served afterwards under Sylla.† With no particular aptitude for the camp, we are told of none of his exploits as a soldier; and it must not be dissembled that his reputation for courage was any thing but distinguished. We may presume,

* His alledged obligations to the players are denied, as in our day, is the tutoring of Talma to Napoleon.

† Middleton.

however, that he gained sufficient experience to facilitate his advancement in the State; and it is not improbable, felt the benefit of this early service, when afterwards governor of Cilicia.

During the absence of Sylla in the war against Mithridates, there was an interval of repose at Rome, in which Molo, the renowned teacher of eloquence, came thither, and our orator was then, as afterwards, his scholar.*

The great struggle between the contending factions was soon after terminated by the concentration of all power in the person of Sylla. The public quiet, and the business of the forum were restored, and Cicero in his twenty-sixth year came to the bar. It is perhaps fortunate that the commotions in the state had prevented his earlier admission; as during their continuance he had an opportunity, at leisure, to accumulate great stores of learning, and to improve that ornate style, for which he was afterwards so celebrated.†

His first efforts at the bar were met with unmeasured applause, and betokened future greatness. The Romans were not more charmed by his eloquence, than by his bold and manly defence of his clients, even when the power and policy of the dictator himself were in question. This early independence, for which, to say the truth, he was not always remarkable, was apparent in the cause of a woman of Aretrium, which he gained in opposition to a man of the first eminence; and in the case of Sextus Roscius.

The truly able defence of Roscius, was made in the consulship of L. Sylla, and Q. Metellus, in the year of Rome 673. Sextus Roscius, the father of the defendant, was a rich citizen of Ameria, and was murdered in Rome, as he was returning from supper. Chrysogonus, a favorite of Sylla, and two of the Roscii, who had quarrelled with their kinsman, shared his ample estate. Fearful that the deed of sale from Chrysogonus might not avail in law, the two Roscii contrived first, to have the name of the murdered man enrolled among the number of the proscribed, and

* De Orat.

† Ibid.

next, to prevent all obstruction in the enjoyment of the spoil, prevailed with Eretrius, a hackney prosecutor, as Guthrie calls him, to accuse the son of the parricide. Cicero, in speaking of this effort, tells us that it was made in the first cause he pleaded, and that it met with such a favorable reception, he was from that moment looked upon as an advocate of the first class, and as equal to the greatest and most important causes, and adds that he shared in many others, the speeches in which were composed beforehand with all the accuracy he could give to them.*

If this speech for Roscius will not favorably compare in point of eloquence, with the great subsequent efforts of Cicero, which we do not admit, there can be no question that there was one cardinal merit here, the absence of which in after life, is not seldom to be lamented. We mean adherence to duty in spite of power. "No motive, said he, can be so powerful as to make my fears get the better of my honor." The reader will see in the course of these pages, how soon this manly determination was abandoned.

Though Cicero speaks of this cause as the first he conducted, he must be understood as referring to a public or criminal cause; as he had in the first year of his admission to the bar, delivered a speech in the case of Publius Quinctius, upon a question growing out of the devise, and partnership transactions of a brother.

In the book of offices, he reflects with pride, upon his manliness on these early occasions, and points his son to the protection of the weak when wronged by the great, as the true road to glory and authority.†

His reputation now established, he determined to travel. Different motives have been imputed to him; and some have said that fear of Sylla was the cause.‡ He informs us himself, "that his health was impaired, that speaking

* Brut.

† *Maxime autem et gloria paritur et gratia defensionibus; eoque major, si quando accidit, ut ei subveniatur, qui potentis alicujus opibus circumveniri urgerique videatur; ut nos et sæpe alias, et adoloscenscentes contra L. Sullæ dominantis opes, pro S. Roscio Amerino fecimus; quæ ut scis exstat oratio.* De Offic, 2, 14.

‡ Plutarch.

without any remission or variation, with the utmost stretch of his voice, and a total agitation of his body, his lungs were endangered, and that rather than forego the hopes of glory looked for in pleading, he resolved to visit Asia, with the sole view of correcting his manner of speaking.* In this he was successful; the defect,† on his return, having almost entirely disappeared.

Some months were spent at Athens, where he applied himself to philosophy and rhetoric, and enjoyed the society of Atticus, whom his friendship has immortalized. In his application to these studies in Greece, he was the more sedulous, as Plutarch tells us that he had already taken his resolution, should he fail in his design of rising in the state, to retire from the forum and all political intrigues, to Athens, and spend his days in peace, in the bosom of philosophy.

On leaving Greece, he passed into Asia, where he was voluntarily attended by the principal orators‡ of the country, with whom he renewed his rhetorical exercises; and on his return, again took lessons at Rhodes, from Molo; who, when Cicero declaimed, is said to have lamented the fortune of Greece, that he should transplant to Rome arts and eloquence, the only ornaments left to her.§ Molo's principal difficulty with him, as we learn from his works, was in restraining the luxuriance of his juvenile imagination.

After an absence of two years, he returned to Rome, with augmented learning, improved style, and renovated health. In allusion to his foreign journey, a modern writer observes that he "leisurely studied Greek authors, was taught to prune off superfluities, and to purify his style, which he did to a high degree of refinement; introducing into his native tongue a sweetness, a grace, a majesty, that surprised the world, and even the Romans themselves;"|| and the orator himself assures us that his improvement

* Brut. 437.

† It is known that Demosthenes had to contend with similar difficulties; and the story of his subterranean study, and shaving his head, to prevent his going abroad, is familiar.

‡ Brut. 437.

§ Plutarch.

|| Kames.

had been thorough, and that on his return he was almost a new man.

His scheme of travel has been on all hands commended; and it is certain that its advantages were much enhanced by the knowledge he had acquired of the government and laws of his own country, before he left it; in this affording a salutary but much neglected lesson, to our modern youth, whose fortunes are equal to foreign tours.

It is said in Plutarch, that Cicero, in returning to Rome, visited Delphi, and that his ambition was rebuked by the answer of the oracle, which advised him to make nature, not the opinion of the people, the guide of his life. This, however, has been well controverted by Dr. Middleton, who thinks it improbable that he would have shewn so great homage to an oracle, which from his works, he seems, with the men of sense of his time, to have held in no estimation.* The famous imposture at Delphi, had, as is known, long exerted a powerful control in the deliberations of states, and had not seldom decided the fate of kingdoms. The presence of the god appears to have been first revealed to goats, animals by no means remarkable for sagacity: the goatherd, attracted by the antics of his flock, became a convert, and general veneration and pilgrimage ensued; yet for a long course of time, the wise and philosophical, and we doubt not Cicero himself, would, but for political purposes, have willingly destroyed its influence, and have consigned the temple, with its wealth, to the fate which, afterwards, under Nero and Constantine befel them. At all events, we know that the admonition of the god did not prevent the return of the Roman to the bar, and that he not only sought its honors with undiminished ardor, but was soon after successful in soliciting the questorship, to which he was unanimously chosen, and which raised him to the dignity of the senate.†

Before his election, he had largely partaken of the toils of his profession; and entered the lists with his great contemporaries Hortensius, and others; with whom, he at once

* De Divin. 2, 56, 57.

† Brut. 223. In Piso 1.

contended, with highest honor to himself—and whom he afterwards far excelled.* The effect of their renown upon his mind and efforts, with the glorious results to which it led, reminds us forcibly of the sorrow of the Grecian, who could not sleep for the trophies of Miltiades. With Cicero, as with the hero of Salamis, it seems to have roused all emulation, and every faculty of his soul was exerted, not so much to equal, as to lead.†

We cannot but regret the loss of the speeches of Hortensius. He was of patrician dignity, and of reputation in oratory, only inferior to that of Cicero. Of Cotta, also eminent at the bar, there are, we believe, but few remains. The task of contrasting their speeches, had they survived, with those of Tully, would have been no doubt delightful; the verdict of posterity may have been different, or at least not so universal in Cicero's behalf; but from unquestionable contemporaneous and other testimony, the superiority of his living fame is not to be impeached. Had Julius Cæsar applied to eloquence, as soberly as he did to the ruin of his country, he, it is thought, might have disputed the palm with the greatest.

The defence of the player Roscius, was made about the time of Cicero's questorship, or rather before it. The tribute of antiquity to the merit of this man, is ample; in his art he was without a rival, in private life most admirable; and if we believe his advocate, worthy of the senate for his virtues. In the speech for Archias, Cicero tells us that Roscius died indeed an old man, but that his art and elegance seemed to challenge an immortality to his person; and Catulus pronounced him more beautiful than the rising sun, though

* "Hortensius pleaded with general applause at 19 years of age, and continued in the same profession, 48 years. Eclipsed by Cicero, he embraced a military life; became a military tribune, prætor, and afterwards consul, at 70 B. C. His rival speaks of him in such a manner as to increase our regret at the loss of his orations; though Quintilian mentions them as much overrated. He had a wonderful memory, and delivered his speeches in reply without taking a single note, or forgetting any thing advanced by his adversary. He died very rich, a little before the civil war, which he had endeavored by all possible means to prevent. He was remarkable for his wealth, affectation, and stock of wines."

† The eloquence and glory of Callistratus seem to have equally, and in the same way, acted upon Demosthenes.—*Plutarch in Dem.*

there was about him a defect, fatal, one would suppose, to beauty: no less than squinting eyes.*

It may be well to state, before we follow Cicero into Sicily, whither the duties of his questorship called him, that he had very early tried his skill in authorship. The genius of this extraordinary man in poetry, appears to have been, at the least, active. We learn from Plutarch, that when in the vein, he could produce five hundred verses in a night. His translations in some fragments, are known to us; and an original poem in praise of Marius, was thought by Scævola to have made him immortal. How far the judgment of Scævola may have been influenced by his relation of director to so hopeful a pupil, we do not know; nor were the entire poem before us, would our skill in Latin verse permit us to approve or condemn his applause. The poem was, however, read and admired by Atticus; whose opinion, if not swayed by friendship, to the prejudice of truth, we might take to be conclusive: his competency as a judge, cannot be questioned.† The reader will see, nevertheless, when

* A slave jointly owned by Roscius and another, was murdered, Roscius prosecuted for the murder, and recovered damages for his share in the slave. His partner, pretending to have received nothing, sued him for the half of the moiety he had recovered. There was in the last century a like instance of eminent art as a player, and integrity and dignity as a man, in the person of Betterton, who, like Roscius, was high in the esteem of an illustrious contemporary, Pope.

† "Titus Pomponius Atticus, was one of the most honorable men of ancient Rome. He understood the art of conducting himself with such address, that without leaving his state of neutrality, he preserved the esteem and affection of all parties. His strict friendship with Cicero did not hinder him from a great intimacy with Hortensius. The contests at Rome, between Cinna's party and that of Marius, induced him to go to Athens, where he continued for a long time. [He acquired his name, Atticus, from his fondness for, and long residence in, Athens.] He was very fond of polite learning, and kept at his house several librarians and readers. He might have obtained the most considerable posts in the government, but forebore to mingle in public affairs out of regard for his philosophy: He was a strict Epicurean, and held pleasure to be the chief good of man, and death the extinction of his being; and had, says Dr. Middleton, all the talents that could qualify a man to be useful to society, great parts, learning, judgment, candor, benevolence, generosity: the same love of his country, and the same sentiments in politics as Cicero, whom he was always advising and urging to act, and yet determined never to act himself: or at least never so far as to disturb his ease, or endanger his safety." After the second triumvirate, Atticus profited by the caution he had maintained, having carried it so far as to prevent the publication of a single one of his numerous epistles to Cicero. His daughter was married to Agrippa, the friend of Augustus, and he afterwards became allied to the Emperor himself, by the marriage of his grand-daughter with the monster Tiberius. He would, however, have scarcely been known, but for his

we recur, as we shall do, to this subject, that in the judgment of Juvenal, and others, Cicero was in no great favor with the muse.

He was married when about thirty years of age, to his first wife Terentia. This lady was rich, and gave him a son and daughter, but is represented as of imperious temper, and otherwise vexatious, and took, he tells us, a far larger share in his political affairs than she was willing to concede to him in domestic matters. He therefore, in after life, availed himself of the facilities the Roman law afforded, and divorced her. If we may judge, however, from his letters when in exile, she was then the object of his respectful affection.*

close relation of friendship to Cicero. "*Nomen Attici perire Ciceronis epistolæ non sinunt. Nihil ille profuisset gener Agrippa, et Tiberius progener, et Drusus pronepos, inter tam magna nomina taceretur, nisi Cicero illura applicuisset.*" Seneca, ep. 21st. It is impossible to approve the time-serving of this polished Roman; but there is much to commend in his generous friendship to Cicero. At no time of need, was his ample purse withheld. Atticus wrote annals, of which Cicero observes, that though he carefully specified the time of every event, and omitted no transaction of moment, he comprised the history of seven hundred years, in a single volume. *De Orat.* 318 to Brut.

*"Notwithstanding the extraordinary facility in obtaining a divorce, it was at first thought disreputable, and four ages appear to have elapsed before it was resorted to. Sp. Carvilius Ruga, repudiated his wife, though deeply enamoured, because of her barrenness; but met with the indignation of all Rome. His example, however, was very promptly followed, and divorces soon became as frequent as they had been rare. When Paulus Æmilius repudiated Papiria, all were astonished—Is not your wife wise? said they. Is she not fair? Has she not brought you children? Pointing to his shoe, Paulus replied: "This shoe, is it not fine? is it not well made? but none of you know where it pinches me. Caius Sulpicius Gallus put away his wife for going bare-headed in public: Sempronius Sophus his, for having whispered a freed-woman—Antistius Vetus his, for going to a public spectacle without his knowledge. Seneca says that there were some, who no longer reckoned the years by the consuls, but by the number of husbands." "*Num quid jam ulla repudio erubescit, postquam illustres quædam ac nobiles feminae non consulum numero sed maritorum annos suos computant.*"—*De Benefic.* l. 3, c. 16. This license had the sanction of the wisest. Cato surrendered his wife to Hortensius, though he had a family by her, and though she was pregnant when put away. On the death of Hortensius, leaving her the heiress of his fortune, to the prejudice of his son, the great Stoick did not hesitate to receive her back again. Cicero put away Terentia for her imperious temper, and for neglect of his domestic affairs. His second wife, it will be seen, met the same fate, but for another cause. Though widowhood was highly applauded, and even secured the epithet "*univira*," by way of honor, Terentia and the charming Tullia appear to have often shewn a disregard of the distinction. Terentia, who lived to a great age, took as a second husband, Sallust, an enemy of Cicero, Messala was her third, and she is said to have had a fourth, Vibius Rufus, even so late as the reign of Tiberius; whilst Tullia, Piso's widow, married before a year had

For his daughter Tullia, he had the tenderest regard, which appears to have been well deserved. To the charms of person, she joined a masculine intellect and noble character; and was so accomplished by his care, as greatly to heighten his enjoyments, when not engaged at the bar, or as a magistrate. Her loss at an early age, was, as we shall see, a source of overpowering grief.

On his arrival in Sicily, in execution of his trust as questor, Cicero appears to have resolved to devote himself to a clear understanding and faithful discharge of his duties, and to forego all diversion, howsoever innocent, which might in any way conflict with them. In this he was so fortunate as to gain the general love of the Sicilians, and to have inspired them with that admiration of his talents and virtues, which they at all times avowed, and which he afterwards gratefully repaid by the prosecution and ruin of their oppressor.

The fair island of Sicily was then, as now, fertile in grain; to supply the city with which, was one of his chief duties as questor, who was a general receiver and treasurer, and whose business it was to provide for the public consumption at home. The distress this year at Rome, was so urgent, and the demand upon the island so great, that there was need of the utmost address in relieving the one, without injury to the other. The necessity for the supply was the greater, as the factious and seditious at home, were availing themselves of the public wants, to exasperate the minds of the people. Great as were the difficulties, the questor subdued them, to the satisfaction of all parties; and so delighted were the Cicilians with his justice, humanity, and courtesy, at this trying crisis, that on the expiration of his office, they decreed to him honors before unheard of.* Cicero need fear no charge of modesty, in this his own

expired, Furius Crasippes, and separating from him, married Dolabella, whom she also quitted. St. Jerome speaks with indignation of a man in his time, at Rome, who had buried 20 wives; and of a woman who had buried 22 husbands. The ladies appear to have fought hard for equality in this important matter, and in all others of a like nature.—*Vid. D'Arnay's private life of the Romans.*

*Pro Planc 26. In Q. Cæcilium 1.

statement of his glories: of his vanity, however, which has been strangely denied, though Plutarch thinks that it often interrupted his best and wisest designs, we shall speak hereafter.

All his leisure whilst abroad was, as usual, devoted to improvement in his favorite art; and his own opinion was, that at the time of his return his abilities as a speaker had reached their zenith. In the succeeding year, he says, when I returned from Sicily my oratorical talents, such as they were, displayed themselves in their full perfection and maturity.* In our view, however, his powers were greatly improved as he advanced in age, and were far more dazzling in middle life than before. Indeed at that time, and afterwards, liberty and the threatened ruin of his country were his great and noble themes. We can imagine none more elevated, or more suited to elicit and perfect oratorical power.

He relates a fact which cannot fail to surprise us when we take into view the great reputation for learning and refinement, which Syracuse, at no ancient period, enjoyed. When in that city, in the progress of a tour through the island, led by natural curiosity, he desired to be shown the tomb of Archimedes; but was amazed to hear from the magistrates, that they knew nothing of it, and it was even denied that any such existed. His reading, however, told him otherwise; he recollected the engraving, and the inscription, and by this means the tomb was discovered.† It is true that letters have perpetuated this great man's fame: we are familiar with the story of his vast mathematical powers, and their efficient application against the Roman arms, and want no brass nor marble evidence of his surpassing genius; yet having given distinction to the Sicilian name, and having been signally useful at the cost of his life, at a moment of utmost peril, he had surely an especial title to the lasting remembrance of Syracuse, and her indifference to his ashes was dishonorable as extraordinary. For obvious rea-

* Brut. 223.

† Tusc. Quaest. 5, 3.

sons, it is the high duty of every state, to yield honor where honor is due, and the public gratitude is not more just than it is politic. "Indeed no man knows, when he cuts off the incitements to a virtuous ambition, and the just rewards of public service, what infinite mischief he may do his country through all generations."—*Edmund Burke*.

It was necessary at Rome, after an election to the quæstorship, that an interval of five years should elapse, before a citizen was eligible to the next highest dignity. The five years between the choice of Cicero as quæstor and his ædileship, were marked by great events. The domestic peace was often disturbed by the popular desire to annul the acts of Sylla; grateful to the higher ranks, and often salutary in themselves; the mithridalick war conducted by Lucullus, was renewed, and after a gallant and protracted struggle, Sertorius was subdued in Spain by Pompey.* About the same time, the war of the gladiators, or servile war, raged in the heart of Italy; and it was soon after, that by sustaining the demands of the people in their efforts to regain the tribunician power, as once enjoyed, Julius Cæsar smoothed the way to his future fatal power.†

From our knowledge of the character of Cicero, had himself been silent, we should infer that during all this interval, his professional zeal had in no degree abated. It was in truth unremitted, and so exercised, as to win him golden opinions. We have, nevertheless, to lament the total loss of his speeches pronounced at this time.

As before, when chosen quæstor, he was now made ædile by unanimous suffrage. He had not, however, entered upon his duties as such, when Verres, sometime governor of Sicily, was prosecuted for extortion and rapine in that province. The speech against Cæcilius, in that part of this cause, called *Divinatio*,‡ will teach us the particular nature of

* *Pro Cluentio* 29.—*Plut. in Luc. et Pom.*

† *Suetonius* 5.—*Appian* 2, 445.

‡ "By *Divinatio*, the Romans meant that kind of trial, in which two or more were concerned among themselves, for the right and privilege of prosecuting. *Asconius* [a good authority in matters of this nature,] is of opinion that this species of trial was called *Divinatio*, from its being conversant, not about a past, but a future event, viz: which of the contending parties should in the issue, be vested with the right of accusing."—[*Guthrie*.] Others think differently; but *Asconius* will enable the reader to understand the text:

the crime charged. "They told me that now was the time for defending, not only the interests, but the lives and properties of a whole people; that their towns were rifled of their gods: therefore to their gods they could have no recourse; that Verres had robbed their most awful shrines of their most venerable images, that whatever could be done by luxury to improve sensuality, by cruelty to heighten pain, by avarice to prompt rapaciousness, or by pride to support insolence, was by this one prætor inflicted."

Cicero, mindful of his promise to the Sicilians, though generally reluctant to accuse, now exerted his best skill in their behalf, when, notwithstanding the efforts of his powerful friends, and a lavish expenditure of wealth, his advocates despairing of success, Verres went voluntarily into exile.*

The humor of the orator, on this great occasion, is said to have been conspicuous; but Plutarch tells us that the cause was gained not so much by pleading, as forbearing to plead. Were we to judge from the specimens of Cicero's humor preserved to us, we should form no very favorable opinion of his character, either as a wit or gentleman: and to us it seems, that his indulgence of it in the case we have in hand, was to the last degree exceptionable, and certainly adverse to the excellent rules he has himself inculcated.† Cæcilius, who desired to prosecute, was no doubt anxious to shield the culprit; and was, for many reasons, the most improper person to be chosen. His pretensions were contemptible; and were, of themselves, a rich and appropriate object of sarcasm; but the orator, after the severest assault upon these, attacks his religion, for he was a Jew, in a play upon the name Verres, signifying swine, of a particular description, among the Romans. We do not complain of the pun, for of that abused species of wit, we profess to be friends; it is its direction we deprecate, and should, at any time, deplore a state of things,

* Ipse etiam Verres, desperato patrocinio, sua sponte, decederat in exilium.

Asconius.

† De Orat. 297.

where an advocate is to be "jeered and scoffed for his religion; or for his belief in matters of faith and speculation, denied the privileges of a man, and cut off from those of a citizen."*

The sarcasm of which Hortensius, the opposite counsel, was the object, is in better taste. He had received as a fee, an ivory *sphinx*, and when in reply to some enigmatical attack of his adversary, he remarked that he knew not how to solve riddles; that is somewhat strange, Cicero retorted, when you have a sphinx in your House.—*Plutarch*.

The prosecution of Verres, was a most important transaction in the life of Cicero, and tended powerfully to rivet the warm affections of the Sicilians, as also to extend his already great esteem at the bar; but though the cause itself was of the first consequence, and may be referred to with profit, we forbear, as foreign to our design, to give a more enlarged history of the crime, or of the efforts of the criminal, to avert the penalty. They who desire to understand them thoroughly, may consult the arguments preserved, as also Dr. Middleton, who is full upon the subject.†

The duties of a Roman *ædile*, originally a plebian officer, were various. He had in charge edifices in general, and the public buildings in particular; had a power to restrain lewdness and gaming; regulated prices, and overlooked the highways; was the depositary of the public decrees, and the guardian, to some extent, of morals; and exerted a control similar to that of a lord chamberlain in England, over plays and other productions of wit.‡ His office obliged him

*Guthrie.

†Howsoever often Verres may have trampled upon all other laws, Cicero informs us that he was exemplary in his obedience to those of the table; which, if we believe Martial, must have been somewhat oppressive: as the king of the feast often obliged the guest to drink as many glasses as there were letters in the name of the person he pledged. *Det numerum cyathis instantis litera Rusi. Mart. 8 ep. 49. Sex jubec cyathos fundere? Cæsar erit. Idem 9, ep. 73.*

‡"It appears by an ancient scholiast on Horace, that Augustus instituted a sort of poetical court of judicature, consisting of five judges, the chief of which was Metius Tarpæ. They held their assembly in the temple of Apollo, and no poet was permitted to bring his play upon the stage, without their approbation. Domitian seems to have improved upon this establishment, and extended it to an academy that distributed prizes to those who excelled, not only in poetical, but prose composition." *Melm. Dac. sur la x sat du. 1, Liv d'Horace. Suet. in Dom.*

to entertain the people with shows and games; and both his integrity and fortunes, were not seldom wrecked by his magnificence. The supposed power of the patricians to indulge the populace in this way, was the original cause of their admission to this dignity; and they rarely escaped the costliest payment for the honor. The general convenience might have been, and no doubt was promoted, by the ædileship; though whatever were its advantages, they would seem to have been far more than balanced by the effect of these immense largesses to the people; as in truth, the entertainments it made necessary, were concealed bribes, debauching the public mind, and leading, among principal causes, to the decay of patriotism, and to the tyrannies that ensued. It may be questioned whether Cæsar, dazzling as is military renown, and potent as it is in controlling the suffrages of a free state, could, without these hidden bribes, have moulded the people to his will, or would have dared, in such a state, to hope for supremacy.*

Up to this period, our orator had, we are told, religiously obeyed the laws, and made no charge, or took reward in any shape for professional service. He had, however, been made the heir to property, valued at ninety thousand denarii. Terentia, his wife, was rich, and Marcus the father, proud of his talents, and mindful of his honor, liberal: and we may therefore presume, that his expense in indulging the people, which he tells us was suited to his purse, if not magnificent, was creditable to himself, and satisfactory to them. The Sicilians had not forgotten him; but their supplies, such as they may have been, were given in bounty to the poor.†

* We may form an adequate idea of Cæsar's means of power, when we learn that he celebrated four different triumphs in one month, and that added to the largesses to the people, in wheat, oil and money, he prepared a feast where 22,000 tables were served with profusion in the streets, and treated them with Chian and Falernian wines. Both of these wines were of the costliest kind, and the first so much so, that the richest indulged in but a single goblet.

† "The Romans of the highest distinction consecrated their talents gratuitously to the service of their fellow citizens, as the protectors of innocence and virtue; yet this generosity was not altogether disinterested. It was properly the instrument of their ambition: the people paid by employing them and honoring them in return. Subsequently, annual presents were made: to check which, the Cincian law was passed, forbidding the receipt, on any pretext whatever, of either money or presents,

The duties of his office do not appear to have so engrossed his time, as to preclude the defence of friends, when arraigned for public offences, or when involved in private difficulties. To have foregone these occasions of display in the great art he loved, would have cost him an effort; and, it may be, have moderated his desire of promotion to the trusts of the government. Happily, however, there was a compatibility between these and the duties of the bar, which, if not peculiar to Rome, is by no means general in our time.

We do not at all marvel, that after the requisite interval, he should have immediately solicited the prætorship, or that he should so soon have raised his hopes to the supreme dignity itself: for, besides the fascinations of power, and his own great abilities, of which we do not doubt he was conscious, the demonstration of popular regard had been such, as to kindle ambition in a heart less warm, and to stimulate his love of glory, the pervading passion of his soul. After some delay, because of tumults in the city, he was declared prætor, and as was the case with his previous honors, unanimously.

In its original, the office of prætor was designed as a relief to the consuls. The prætor assisted those magistrates, and exerted the highest judicial authority at Rome. At first, there was but one; their number increasing as the extension of the empire made it necessary. The prætor Urbanus, was so called from his residence in the city, and jurisdiction in cases at home, whilst his associates were either by the consuls or people sent into the provinces. At the expiration of their high function, a foreign government, limited at the pleasure of the people, was due to them.

especially for pleading." A far different course prevailed under the empire: Tacitus says that "the advocates made a shameful traffic of their engagements, and that their treachery was offered for sale in the public market." "Nam cuncta legum et magistratuum munia in se trahens princeps, materiam prædandi patefecerat: nec quidquam publicæ mercis tam venale fuit quam advocatorum perfidia."—Annal, L. 2, 5: And Juvenal represents them as affecting to appear in litters, richly clothed, and with great attendance, displaying while they pleaded, their hands loaded with rings, in order to be thought extremely rich, and to procure larger fees.—Sat: vii. 136. There was an ordinance of Charlemagne, which forbade lawyers, when they went to plead, to take with them more than thirty horses."—*D'Arnay's Private Life of the Romans.*

When Cicero was chosen, it was usual with the prætors, to determine their several jurisdictions by lot; and his fortune seems to have been suited to his character and talents; as to him fell the actions of extortion and rapine, brought against magistrates and governors of provinces.

Dr. Middleton mentions but one case in which he acted as prætor; where, however, he acquired great reputation by the condemnation of Licinius Macer, a man of high dignity and great eloquence. Plutarch tells us that "Macer, who had great interest of his own, and was supported besides, by Crassus, was accused of some default with respect to money. He had so much confidence in his own influence, and the activity of his friends, that when the judges were going to decide, it is said he went home, cut his hair, and put on a white habit, as if he had gained the victory, and was about to return, so equipped, into the forum. But Crassus met him, and told him, that the cause had gone against him, which affected him so much, that he returned home, took to his bed and died. Cicero was much applauded in this affair; for it appeared that he kept strict watch against corruption." Another† writer has it, that Macer died in court. The judge himself informs us, that he tried the cause with candor and justice, and reaped no little honor in consequence; and is, as far as we know, silent as to the tragedy.—*Ad. Att.* 1, 4.

We are now to consider an act, in which Cicero was supposed, we fear not altogether without justice, to have been animated more by a desire of individual aggrandizement, than by the patriotic purpose he has so solemnly and eloquently avowed. Pompey had been in his youth, distinguished, and by Sylla named the great. Always ambitious, his lust of power was at this time strong, and in spite of dissimulation, in which he was an adept, obvious to many. Already in command against the pirates, it was now sought by the Manilian law, to enlarge his commission, and to confide to him the conduct of the Pontic war—an exorbitant power, and, as we think, without precedent.

† Valerius Maximus.

From Plutarch we may learn the vast authority to which it was proposed by the Manilian law to add. "Gabinus, a friend of Pompey, proposed the decree, which created him not admiral, but monarch, and invested him with absolute power. The decree gave him the empire of the sea as far as the pillars of Hercules; and of the land, for four hundred furlongs from the coast. There were few parts of the Roman empire which this commission did not include, and the most considerable of the barbarian nations, and most powerful kings, were moreover comprehended in it. Besides, he was empowered to choose out of the senators fifteen lieutenants to act under him, in such districts, and with such authority, as he should appoint. He was to take from the questors and other public receivers, what money he pleased, and equip a fleet of two hundred sail. The number of marine forces, of mariners, and rowers, was left entirely at his discretion." Manilius, when it was understood that the war against the pirates was finished, and that Pompey was employing his leisure in visiting the cities, proposed in a new law to give him "all the forces and provinces under the command of Lucullus; adding, likewise, Bythinia, which was then governed by Glabrio. It directed him to carry on the war against Mithridates and Tigranes: for which purpose, he was also to retain his naval command. This was subjecting, at once, the whole Roman empire to one man; for the provinces which the former decree did not give him—Phrygia, Lycaonia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, the upper Colchis and Armenia—were granted by this, together with all the forces under Lucullus, with which he had defeated Mithridates and Tigranes."

This law, though opposed by the best and wisest in Rome, prevailed; and Pompey was substantially a monarch. Cicero, in upholding the grant, did not, as we have said, escape censure. His speech on the occasion, though far too prodigal of praise, was admirable, and is one of the most celebrated that he ever pronounced; but although he is earnest in painting the exigency as demanding the extraordinary power he proposed to bestow, and although he

professes to think that the power itself, found sufficient sanction in precedent, we cannot escape a doubt of his sincerity. Dazzled by his hopes of the consulship, which he at all times avowed to be a leading object of his ambition, and at which he was then aiming, there is good reason to think that he believed his purpose could be more easily effected by indulgence to the party of Pompey, than by adherence to Hortensius, Catulus and the senate, who were opposed to the grant: laudably jealous of the mighty and uncontrollable power it conferred: and it is difficult to believe, that learned as he was, in the Roman constitution and history, and with foresight,* for which no human being, save a prophet, was ever more distinguished, he could have deemed it even safe, far less urgently necessary, to create a power, with no check but the probity of its depositary, and called for only by imminent and immediate peril, for the mere purpose of closing a foreign and a distant, but not appalling war. Nor in our view would the grant of so inordinate authority have been at all the more prudent, even were it positively certain that the name and presence of Pompey would have healed the dissensions in the army, or have forever disabled the enemies of Rome in the East; for, throwing aside the injustice to Lucullus, whom the law stripped of his command, whose whole life had been a series of illustrious actions, who had performed the greatest in this very war, and had just baffled Tigranes, the most powerful enemy in Asia; exploits upon which Cicero himself exhausted eulogy; the law was vicious as a precedent, and may well be regarded as an early and no inefficient cause of the calamities which ensued, and which, as is known, resulted in the hopeless fall of the republic.

We have no positive evidence of distrust on the part of Cicero, of the character and designs of Pompey, at the time the Manilian law was sustained; and, therefore, only venture to condemn his support of it, as promoting a power

* *Ut facile existimari possit prudentiam, quodammodo, esse divinationem. Non enim Cicero, ea solum, quæ vivo se acciderunt, futura prædixit, sed etiam, quæ nunc usu veniunt, cecinit ut vates.*—Corn. Nepos, 16-

clearly beyond the constitution, and incalculably more than commensurate with the exigency. It is far from folly, however, to suspect, when we reflect upon his sagacity and letters written not long after, that even thus early Pompey was not, in his honest judgment, the immaculate being he proclaimed him. If he did at this time, entertain the opinion, soon afterwards revealed, and did not confine its expression to his intercourse with his friend, there is no marvel that sinister motives were imputed to him, nor would all the matchless glories of his consulate, the high bribe for his defection, efface the stain. Mindful of his criminal devotion to power, at later periods of his eventful life, it was not more our duty, than anxious desire, to present him to the reader, so long as truth would admit, with integrity as spotless as his dignity was eminent; nor are we conscious that up to the moment of which we treat, stern justice herself could wound him with reproach. We close an inquiry which we have no disposition here to expand, with the earnest denial of Cicero himself.

“I call the gods to witness, and especially those who preside over this temple, and inspect the minds of all who administer the public affairs, that I neither do this at the desire of any one, nor to conciliate Pompey’s favor, nor to procure from any man’s greatness, either a support in dangers, or assistance in honors; for as to dangers, I shall repel them as a man ought to do by the protection of my innocence, and for honors, I shall obtain them, not from any single man, nor from this place, but from my usual laborious course of life and the continuance of your favor. Whatever pains, therefore, I have taken in this cause, I have taken it all, I assure you, for the sake of the republic; and so far from serving any interest of my own, have gained the ill will and enmity of many—partly secret and partly declared—which I might have avoided, and by which you may profit; but after so many favors received from you, and this very honor which I now enjoy, I have made it my resolution, citizens, to prefer your will, the dignity of the repub-

lic, and the safety of the provinces, to all my own interests and advantages whatsoever.”*

During his prætorship, Cicero did not withhold his services from his friends, but shared as usual, in the criminal and other trials; and in one of them† we find him charging the mother of his client with crimes scarce to be believed. The unsparing pages of Tacitus present none more flagitious. Indeed Rome had long departed from her ancient probity and simplicity, and was now polluted by the frightful enormities so common under the empire. The crimes of Clodius were worthy of Caracalla; and the black catalogue of imperial monsters can scarce furnish a parallel to Catiline.

About this time the orator attended the lectures of a famous rhetorician; not, his partial historian Dr. Middleton supposes, with a view to learn any thing new, for here he deems him to have been perfect, but to encourage the professor, and to inspire the young nobles with ambition to excel. We are far from denying that he was capable of so excellent a motive; for in such things he was most commendable; yet it does not seem to us improbable, that at forty years of age, he should think, that somewhat even in rhetorick might be learned. Besides, Suetonius,‡ whom the Doctor quotes, tells us that he was but one of a number of illustrious pupils to Gniphō; who, as we conceive, was preeminent in his way, and either from a new mode of teaching, or from superior learning, was supposed able to impart a knowledge of his art, before unattainable at Rome. But of this enough.

Having filled the subordinate offices with general satisfaction, Cicero now approached the period when all his toils were to be repaid by his elevation to the sovereign trust. To this, he had long looked with anxious hope, and

*Pro. Lege Manil. 24. Cicero had not long before the passage of the Manilian law condemned as boundless, a power entrusted to M. Antonius for the mere inspection of the coasts of the Mediterranean. In Verrem, 2, 3.

†Pro Cluentio, 70.

‡Scholam ejus claros viros frequentasse aiunt: in his M. Ciceronem cum prætura fungeretur. Suet. de clar. Grammat vii.

all, we think, should agree that he discharged it with appropriate dignity and lustre. Before, however, we come to his consulship, there is one event which should not be overlooked. Catiline, whose character and dark designs have been so well told by Sallust, was charged with misgovernment and rapine in Africa. His crimes were of the deepest atrocity, but his dissimulation such, as to secure to him the support of many of the powerful and honest of the nobles: the rather as his own birth was illustrious. Cicero too, was so far his dupe, as to have well nigh undertaken his defence.* Frustrated in his first attempt upon the consulship, not being permitted under so heavy a charge to urge his pretensions, Catiline is said, thus early, to have leagued with others in disgrace, and to have contemplated not only the slaughter of the consuls with many of the senate, but a total subversion of the government itself.† The conspiracy does not appear to have been well matured at this time, and was for a season abandoned.

Meanwhile Cicero, by soliciting votes in person, by a journey into Gaul, and by all the means to which a candidate might honorably resort, was industrious in conciliating the favor of the people, and was, at last, to his singular honor, pronounced consul by acclamation: the ballot, in his case, being dispensed with.‡ Generally acceptable to

* Pro Coelio—perhaps the most entertaining of all our orator's speeches.

† Sallust, 18.

‡ "Candidates solicited votes. Their relations and friends, their clients, and even senators of the highest rank, through affection or complaisance, accompanied them, and recommended them to all they met; and as it was a mark of respect among the Romans, as among the Greeks, to call and salute people by their proper names and surnames, and scarce possible for a candidate to remember them, they employed slaves as nomenclators, whose sole occupation was to learn the names and business of the citizens, and to distinguish their persons at first sight, in order to inform their masters, who would then assume an air of acquaintance, shake hands and talk familiarly with them in the street. Thus Horace makes this civility necessary, to acquire new dignities."

Si fortunatum species, et gratia præstat;

Mercesur servum qui dictet nomina, &c. &c.—Ep. 6, L. 1.

Well then, if wealth alone our bliss ensure,
Our first, our latest toil, should wealth secure:
If pride and public pomp the blessing claim,
Let's buy a slave to tell each voter's name,
And give the hint, and through the crowded street
To stretch the civil hand to all we meet.

the people, one other cause contributed to this extraordinary success. There was a large party in Rome hostile to the laws of Sylla. These, for the most part wise, were denounced as abridging the rights of the people; and the memory of the monster was too green, to admit of their peaceful reign. The better sort, however, did not desire a change, and it was owing to the dreaded machinations of Catiline, with some of this party, and a general distrust of his designs, that the nobles, waiving all prejudice, sustained Cicero, as the man most fit to obstruct them. Hence the unanimity of his election. His competitors were of patrician and noble rank; and it is well to mention here, that having been the first of his family, which was of the equestrian order, to enjoy the public magistracies, he was for that reason, called a *new man*,* and not, as many believe, because of obscurity of birth. Caius Antony was chosen with him.

“The Fabian tribe *his* interest largely sways;
This the Velinian; there, a third with ease,
Can give or take the honors of the state,
The consuls fasces, and the prætor’s seat;
According to their age adopt them all,
And brother, father, most facetious call.”—*Fran. Hor. Pri. Life Rom.*

Cicero himself, in the height of his dignity, exerted his influence in behalf of friends. Ad, D. Brutum.—*Ep. Fam.*

* *Novi homines* were those who had no right to keep the images of their ancestors, or use them in processions. *Homines ignobiles* were such as neither had their own, nor their ancestors’ images. The designation “noble,” was common to both patricians and plebeians: the curule magistracies, to which the latter were eligible, giving title to nobility.—*Guthrie. Middleton*, 1. 149.

SECTION II.

THE great orator, scholar and statesman, now clothed with authority extensive as the empire, began his rule with the patriotic desire to promote its peace at home, and reputation abroad. His first step was to weaken the existing cabals, and to ensure the cordial co-operation of his colleague. From this man, when made consul, the enemies of the state had much to hope; as upon strong grounds, he was supposed friendly to their worst desires. The tribunes had proposed to the people the creation of a decemvirate, with extravagant powers; its authority was to extend throughout Italy, over Syria, and all the late conquests of Pompey.

Antony was pleased with the law, and hoped to be embraced in the list of the ten; but was seduced from its support by his colleague, who yielded to him the rich province of Macedonia, and thus appeased his avarice, the great source of his defection.* So effectual, we are told, was this lure, that afterwards, like a hired player, he would act under Cicero for the good of the commonwealth.† His colleague secured, in an eloquent speech to the people he next denounced the law, and not only succeeded in defeating it, but gained other concessions unasked for. His integrity and oratorical powers on this occasion, deserved, and have won for him, the warm commendation of Plutarch, whose praise is more valuable, as his general opinion of the man is not the most favorable. Indeed to the far greater part of the consulship, the enthusiastic admirer of

* Collegam suam Antonium pactione provinciæ popularet, ne contra Rempublicam dissentiret —Sall. Bell. Cat. 26.

† Plutarch.

Cicero may point with pride, and with no fear of rebuke : it was marked by wisdom, sagacity, love of country, and surpassing eloquence, and had he died at its close, would have alone secured to him immortal glory.

He had now, so far as the distractions of the times would admit, succeeded in giving stability and efficiency to his administration; had weaned his associate from malpractices, and through his love of gain, made him faithful to his high duties; by weight of character, and persuasive powers, had reconciled the discordant feelings of the senate and equestrian order, and infused into the public councils a degree of harmony then most rare. Animated by the purest love of country, as well as by his hopes of glory, at no period in the life of Cicero was the majesty of his eloquence more conspicuous; and it is not often, if ever, in the history of mankind, that we have witnessed in a higher degree, the power of that divine art, in controlling human affections, or when made subservient to virtue, in recommending her sanctions to the adoption of states. We have already seen with what success the law of Rullus, creating a decemvirate, was withstood. That was an agrarian law; far more liberal than any of its predecessors, and like them most gratifying to the people. Under it, the commissioners were clothed with boundless power over the revenues of the republic, and might at pleasure distribute them. In short they commanded the money and forces of the empire. To the senate, and all the friends of peace, the proposal of such a law was ground of natural alarm: the consul partook of it, and by a signal triumph over the tribunes, removed it.

There is abundant proof of the wonderful power of Cicero's eloquence about this time. Otho, a tribune, had separated the knights from the common class; allotting to them conspicuous seats in the theatre. The people were enraged, and when he entered the house he was received with hisses, and every demonstration of anger; and the utmost confusion prevailed to the complete interruption of the performance. Cicero, informed of the disturbance,

called the rioters to the temple of Bellona, and in an eloquent reproof wrought so entire a change in their feelings, that the tribune was applauded and his act approved.* If not awed by the power of the consul, it could have been no ordinary eloquence to soothe the pride of freemen, attacked in so delicate a matter. Long accustomed not only to their pleasures, and to rule by their votes, but to partake largely of all the honors of the government, the senseless and aristocratic arrangement of the tribune must have been peculiarly galling. The speech not being preserved, we know not the reasons by which indignation apparently so just, was appeased. Dr. Middleton, however, on the authority of an old writer, tells us that the rioters were rebuked for want of taste in interrupting so accomplished an actor as Roscius; an argument which, though well suited to the people of Athens, we should not have supposed so effectual at Rome.

Thus commanding with the people, the might of his eloquence was seen in other quarters; and here it made captive, affections to which nature clings with more than common tenacity. Sylla, in his rage, had excluded the children of the proscribed from seats in the senate and all public honors, and at this time there were many of exalted birth and equal merit consigned by that act to obscurity. It was natural that the sufferers should press its revocation. They did so; but Cicero, fearful that when restored to power, the memory of past wrongs would kindle a desire of revenge, and the public peace be endangered, yielded to what he believed the paramount claims of the commonwealth, and notwithstanding the clear reason and justice of the prayer, discouraged the petitioners, and actually succeeded in impressing them with his own opinion; though not without subjecting himself to an imputation with others of conspiracy against the constitution. We mention this case in proof of his extraordinary power of persuasion, and do not arraign the purity of his motive:

* Plutarch.

it is not every casuist, however, that would authorize the denial of a claim confessedly good, from a mere fear of contingent evil, or go along with the consul in this matter, in his judgment of the effect of circumstances upon the attribute of justice. For ourselves, admitting his purity, we think that his wisdom may well be doubted. It is not easy to approve that "transcendental philosophy" which teaches to do evil that good may come. Many believe, and we profess to be with them, that it is uniformly safer, in reference to any contemplated measure, public or private, to inquire not merely whether it is politic, but whether it be just; nor can it be pretended that the demands of justice, imperative at all times, are ever more so than in the adjustment of political powers. It is there that justice imparts enduring strength to such powers. Based upon her hallowed principles, they may become rich fountains of all public blessings; otherwise, to content and happiness there are few so fatal adversaries. In the case in question, the claim of the proscribed was beyond all doubt constitutional; and but for an eloquence scarcely ever to be looked for, and certainly not to be relied on, the denial of justice might and probably would have resulted in convulsion. Indeed in the absence of such eloquence, the injured parties would, in all likelihood, have furthered the conspiracy of which we are presently to treat.

Doctor Middleton, in his defence of Cicero on this occasion, supposes him to have acted upon a maxim, which has come down to us in his book of offices, "that many things which are naturally just and right are yet by certain circumstances and conjunctures of times made dishonest and unjust,"* and extols his wisdom in so doing. If the consul were in sincerity governed by this maxim, of which we have no means of judging, it is not right as Guthrie has done, to impeach his integrity; though in our view the maxim, when applicable at all, is only so in cases where the circumstances divesting a claim of equity, are of a certain and

* Sic multa quæ honesta videntur esse temporibus fiunt non honesta.—*De Offic.* 3.25.

present nature, and not where they consist in possible or even probable contingencies; in other words, though in the case we are considering, had the clear rights of the petitioners been conceded, the anticipated evils might have arisen, and though nobody doubts Cicero's wonderful foresight; yet we venture to think that this faculty, how admirable soever, is in no case to be indulged at the costly price of justice.

The atrocious design of Catilinæ, suspended as we have seen, was not abandoned, and although it contemplated utter confusion, there can be no doubt that it had the good will as well as covert aid of some of the highest in Rome. Greedy of the sovereign power, he now renewed his attempt upon the consulship, and determined to kill Cicero in the tumult of the election; justly dreading, that as long as he lived, and enjoyed the influence to which his character and eloquence entitled him, his own bad ambition must meet rebuke, and all his machinations fail. Besides, a late law of Cicero against bribery, aimed as he believed at him, had stimulated his desire of vengeance. His intention, however, became known to the consul, at whose suggestion the day of election was deferred. Meanwhile he was summoned to answer, and did so with such matchless insolence, speaking so contemptuously of the senate, and hinting so clearly his design to put himself at the head of the people, that few believed him to have been falsely charged. Cicero, who according to Plutarch, was sufficiently frightened on this occasion, put on a coat of mail, and attended by a goodly number of the youth, repaired on the day of election to the Campus Martius, and exposed his armor to the people, who then believed him to be in danger, and highly incensed, again rejected Catiline, and made Silanus and Muræna consuls.*

If we could suppose Catiline, at any moment from the inception of his terrible design, to have been capable of a

* Cicero tells us in the speech for Muræna, that he put on that *broad remarkable mail*, not to defend himself; for he well knew that Catiline generally struck at the neck and head, not at the side or belly; but to alarm all worthy patriots.

repentant impulse, this last overthrow completely stifled it. Pompey being yet absent, he now thought it a proper time to give effect to the tragedy he meditated; and relied in case of need upon the veteran forces in Italy. These, formerly commanded by Sylla, had long since lavished in debaucheries, the means which the liberality of that dictator had afforded, and were now ripe for a change.* Manlius, their present commander, sharing their feelings, was already in Rome, whither he had gone to assist the traitor, when suing for the consulship.

The partners in the treason at home, were men of distinguished birth, of no extraordinary talents, of broken fortunes and profligate life. The great abilities of the chief have at no time been in question. With consummate art, he had bound his associates to his interests, by catering for their several passions. To the "ambition of one, was held out the prospect of the provinces and command: to avarice, wealth; and to the voluptuous, the charms of leisure and of revels."† Thus leagued, their plan was this: Lentulus, Cassius, Cethegus, and the other principal conspirators, were to remain in Rome, and Catiline prepared to head the forces abroad. Before his departure, he had so arranged that two of his party on pretence of a visit, should murder the consul, who, however, averted the danger, in consequence of information received through Fulvia, the mistress of Curius, one of the band. The time was now fixed for the execution of the plot; and it was not without good reason, that they who conceived it, cherished a hope of its success. A great part of the Roman youth was corrupted, many of the nobles by profusion were impoverished, and above all, a vast inequality of fortune, at all times a fruitful source of evil in a free state, had bred the desire of change. The consul, aware that their scheme was maturing, with admirable sagacity, by means of spies and otherwise, became master of the most secret

* Sylla divided the lands around Fesulæ among his soldiers, and advanced some of them to the equestrian and even senatorian order.

† Sallust.

resolves, and denounced them to the senate; whereupon that body clothed him with the power never conferred but at a moment of great peril, to see that the republic received no detriment.

Catiline with wonted insolence had taken his seat, and made an attempt to repel the charge, "urging the want of likelihood that he, a man of illustrious birth, and whose past life as well as that of his ancestors, had given proof of his and their affection for the Roman people, should desire to subvert the government, while Cicero, a stranger and late inhabitant of Rome, should be so zealous to support it." The effect, however, of the consul's charge was such, that the senate would not listen to him, and judging further dissimulation unavailing, he withdrew from the devoted city, breathing slaughter and revenge.* According to Plutarch, he soon found himself at the head of twenty thousand men, when hostilities thus openly commencing the consul Antony was sent against him. At a meeting of the conspirators it had been before agreed, that whilst Catiline was to attempt an insurrection in Italy, the city itself was to be fired, and a general massacre ensue. Lentulus was to preside in their black councils, Cassius superintend the conflagration, and Cethegus enact the butcher of the plot.

The wisdom of the consul at this crisis, is not at first view manifest. Satisfied of the traitorous intent of Catiline, and knowing, as he must have known, that his power, though not equal to a successful struggle with the troops of the republic, was yet far from despicable; all Tuscany and part of Cisalpine Gaul being prepared for revolt, it does seem extraordinary, that he should not only urge his departure, but press it with most anxious eloquence. That in sparing the criminal, or in leaving him at large, with the walls of Rome between them, Cicero had his own safety in view, will admit of no question; but we can well imagine that in his honest judgment, the safety of the state, as well as his own, was secured by lenity. There was not a doubt acting upon his

* In Cat.

mind, of great and extended guilt. To him, the conspirators and their dark purposes were known; but he could at that moment, command no proof of their enormities; at least not such as would confound the numerous and powerful friends of the treason by whom he knew the city to be infested; or silence the clamors of his personal enemies, who, if Catiline had been condemned in the then state of proof, would have arraigned his government as a tyranny, and have paralysed his best efforts for the good of the republic. But Catiline, at liberty, soon revealed himself; the conviction of his guilt became, of course, universal, and the consul, by an union of all the honest, was then able effectually to wield the power of the commonwealth, for its own preservation.

In his speeches to the senate and people, Cicero disclosed the grounds of his forbearance. "But there are some," says he, "in this assembly, who either do not perceive, or are unwilling to own, their sense of our approaching ruin: whose lenient measures cherished the hopes of Catiline, and whose incredulity nursed the infancy of his treason. Many, destitute of either wisdom or virtue, following their authority, would have said, that in putting him to death, I had acted in a cruel and a regal manner. Now do I perceive, that should he return to where he intends, the camp of Manlius, there is not a Roman so stupid, as not to see, or so wicked, as not to own, that a conspiracy is formed. His single death, I perceive, may for a while abate, but never can it extinguish this pestilence of my country. But should he eject himself, should he carry his accomplices along with him; should he make that camp the common centre of his desperate, his now shipwrecked faction; not only this pestilence of the state now ripened into maturity, but the very roots, the very seeds of all treason, shall be cut up and destroyed. True it is, conscript fathers, that long have we trod among the dangerous, the doubtful arts of treason; but by what means has it happened, that in my consulate, the tumor pregnant with every guilt, with long gathering rage and insolence, has ripened into breaking?

But if from such a confederacy in treason, this one traitor only shall be removed, we may perhaps enjoy a short temporary relaxation from care and concern, but still shall the danger remain lurking in the veins and vitals of our country. As patients in the anguish of a disease, and parched with feverish heat, are at first seemingly relieved by a draught of cold water, but soon the disease returns with redoubled force and pain; so our country, gaining a short interval of ease, by the punishment of this traitor, will from his surviving confederates, languish with more mortal symptoms: Wherefore, conscript fathers, let the wicked retire; let them sever themselves from the virtuous; let them herd together in one place: in short, as I have often said, let a wall divide us; no longer let them beset the consul in his own house; environ the city prætor, 'beseige the court with their swords, or lay up magazines of combustible balls and brands for firing the city. In short, let the sentiments of every man with regard to the public, be inscribed on his forehead. This, conscript fathers, now I promise, that such shall be the diligence of your consuls; such the weight of your body; such the courage of the Roman knights, and such the unanimity of all the wise and worthy, that upon Catiline's retreat, you shall perceive him and all his treasons, discovered, exposed, confounded and punished. Begone, O Catiline! begone with omens such as these, into an impious, an execrable war, and may its issue prove salvation to this country; desolation, destruction and death to thee, and all the associates of thy boundless guilt and treason. Then, then, O Jove! whose name Romulus consecrated by the same rites with which he founded the city: thou whom we rightly call the stay of this city and empire; thou shalt repel him and his accomplices, from thy altars: from the temples of the other gods: from the roofs and the walls of Rome, from the lives and properties of our citizens: then shall thy eternal vengeance, in life as in death, overtake all the foes of the virtuous—all the enemies of their country; all the robbers of Italy, and all who are linked in the mutual bands of treason and execrable conspiracy."

And again, on the next day, in a speech to the people:—
“Great surely must be Catiline’s perdition, and glorious our conquest, since we have forced him out of the character of a bosom traitor, into that of an avowed rebel. If any one accuse me that I did not rather apprehend than send away, this most formidable enemy, that, O Romans, is not my fault, but that of the juncture. Death and the severest judgment of his country ought long ago to have overtaken Catiline: the practice of our ancestors, the justice of our government, and the interests of our country, required me to put him to death. But how many do you imagine were there who would not believe what I advanced? How many, who from stupidity, could not have thought it, and how many would have loved him for his wickedness.”*

In the mean time, Lentulus and the rest were not idle. It was agreed to divide the city into one hundred parts, and at a fixed hour, each was to be fired; the murder of the citizens was to be general; the sons of Pompey saved as hostages, alone excepted. In short, they had devised a plan of havoc and desolation worthy of Catiline. “In mercy, however, to mankind, his genius was absent;” the fate of the empire was debated over the bottle, without wile, and, as it would seem, recklessly.

There were in Rome, about this period, ambassadors from the Allobroges, a people of Gaul. That province had been long and much oppressed, and it was thought that through the envoys the small remains of its loyalty might be shaken. They were accordingly approached, and emancipation tendered to their countrymen, if by commotions, they would further the conspiracy. But the shrewd barbarians, on mature deliberation, resolved not only to withhold all aid, but to disclose to Fabius Sanga, the patron of their nation, the offers which had been made to them. The indefatigable Cicero, apprised by his emissaries, or it may be by† Sanga

* In Cat. 1. 2.

† Cicero had certain intelligence of all Catiline’s private deliberations, through Curius, one of the conspirators, whom Fulvia, a courtesan, had persuaded to betray their secrets.

himself, of the treaty with the ambassadors, and of their final determination, sought an immediate interview, and instructed them to feign an approval of the scheme, as also to ask letters to Catiline, and such credentials as might enable them, at home, more completely to meet the views of the conspirators. To this they assented, and at the next meeting, the reason of their demand was at once admitted, and the papers not only furnished, but accompanied with particular letters from Lentulus and others, slightly disguised in their import, and under the writer's own seal.* In a word, the documents were such, as if intercepted to threaten the hopeless defeat of the whole enterprise; and thus, by the folly of these subaltern fiends, more exquisite, if possible, than their guilt, was the hideous catastrophe averted.

In an arrangement with the ambassadors, a time was agreed upon for their departure, accompanied by Vulturcius, a deputy from Lentulus to Catiline; and two of the prætors were commanded to provide an ambuscade at the Milvian bridge, where on the arrival of the party they were arrested, and their papers seized. Whereupon the consul convened the senate in the temple of Concord, and attended by a guard of the citizens, with the Gauls and the conspirators in custody, laid the whole matter before them. The evidence of the papers, in itself strong, was confirmed by the disclosures of Vulturcius, to whom, by order of the senate, a promise of reward and pardon had been given. The conspirators were themselves confounded, the belief of their guilt was general, and they were detained until the senate should decide upon their punishment. There was a delicacy in this matter at Rome, not known in our day, and it may well be questioned, whether her aversion from

*In the time of Cicero, the seal served for a signature. The method of signing was introduced under the emperors. One day that a sentence of death was presented to the emperor Nero, "Would to heaven," said he, "that I knew not how to write 'vellem nescire literas,' " with that tone of clemency and air of compassion, which he affected in the beginning of his reign. Augustus had a sphinx, afterwards an image of Alexander: Mecænas had a frog, and Galba a dog on the prow of a ship, as seals.—*D'Arnay*.

capital inflictions, had not, in many cases, involved her in calamities, which a less clement code would have averted. The senate, it is true, had often claimed, and exercised a power, in alarming exigencies, of taking the life of a citizen; but we do not know that such a power found a sanction in the Roman constitution; unless such may be seen in a necessity of state. There had been laws, moreover, by which the power of condemnation, in capital cases, was guaranteed to the people. By the older of these, they had an appellate, by the latter an original power. Hence, it was not without grave deliberation, and anxious doubt, even at the awful crisis now presented to the senate, where the guilt was manifest, and the crime imported no less than the general ruin, that the death of the criminals was determined.

The eloquence of Cæsar, on this great occasion, has been much extolled, and his opposition to the doom of death, relied upon as proof of his imputed friendliness to Catiline and his designs; but to us it appears that his speech did but echo the feeling of the Roman people, as displayed in their laws: a feeling, which we know to have acted upon the senate, and would have controlled it, but for the imminency of the danger, the weight of Cato's counsels, and the eloquence of Cicero.

Before the fate of the prisoners was determined, the senate, which seems to have well appreciated its vast obligations to the consul, by whose watchful care the state had indeed been preserved, decreed thanks to the man "through whose virtue, counsel, and providence, the republic was delivered from the greatest dangers, and resolved that there should be a public thanksgiving in Cicero's name, for his having preserved the city from a conflagration, the citizens from a massacre, and Italy from a war."*

The great question of the punishment now came on for decision. The personal ease, as well as safety of the consul, would have been plainly promoted by clemency; but,

* In Cat. 3.

he would suffer no personal considerations to mingle themselves with his determination. It was his settled belief, made up with pious regard to the happiness of his country, and to the rights of the offenders, that they were not fit to live; and therefore, after a profound and patient attention to Cæsar and the others who counselled imprisonment, with confiscation of goods; with infinite address he avowed his opinion, and sustained by Cato, prevailed. We have already, we fear, too often departed from the design of this sketch, or should here have presented copious extracts from this high debate. We refer to it, however, in further proof of Cicero's mighty power in the great art to which he owes so much of his renown.*

The doom now fixed, the consul, fearful that new disturbances would spring from delay, proceeded at once to execute the decree; and Lentulus, Cethegus and others, were delivered to the executioners and strangled. The glories of Cicero, on this great day of deliverance to his country, his own proud expressions can scarce magnify. The homage to his virtue was universal, and all his cares approved: followed by the good, and wise, and great, the streets were illuminated, and resounded with his praise. In short, all Rome joined in one great oblation of thanks and congratulations to her deliverer.

The city saved from massacre and fire, the great chief of the conspiracy, hunted on all sides, was bravely contending in arms, for life and empire. As had been foreseen, on intelligence of the total ruin of his party at home, his present hope was an escape into Gaul;† but again thwarted by the pervading care of the consul, who had thrown a force under Metellus into that province, his destiny seemed now to be accomplished. Never, in the language of a modern hero,‡ had a commander a more complete choice of difficulties. Shut up within the mountains, and driven at last by necessity, to fight, he preferred the consul Antony, though far stronger than Metellus, as his adversary; influenced, no

*In Cat. 4.

†Ibid 2.

‡Wolfe.

doubt, by a hope, that in memory of past friendship, that general would not use his power to his ruin. It is certain, that Antony, either from a real, or feigned attack of gout, did not command: the army was confided to Petreius, a brave and loyal soldier: a struggle now became inevitable, when Catiline, fighting to the last, "armed with a glory high as his despair,"* died in battle.

If we contemplate the Roman republic in the age of which we write, there is no difficulty in detecting not a few of the maladies of a declining state. These are discernible in a government, at no time free from elements of discord, unusually distracted; in the pollution of the elective franchise; and in the pride, rapacity and luxury, born of extended empire and eastern gold. Near a century before, these latter stains had attracted the notice, and provoked the prophecy of the censor Cato. "I have often," he said, "complained before you of the luxury of the women and of the men, as well magistrates as private persons: you have often heard me say, that the republic was attacked by two contrary evils, avarice and luxury; two plagues which have overturned the greatest empires. The state becomes more flourishing from day to day, and makes continually new advances. Already have we advanced into Greece, and into Asia, opulent countries, and full of the incitements which can raise the passions: already have our hands reached the treasures of kings. But it is that very opulence which alarms me, at which I tremble. I dread lest the spoils of conquered enemies should be fatal to us, and we become the slaves of those riches which our arms have gained." "And it is not one hundred and ten years," says our orator, "since the laws against extortion have appeared among us. The first of these was established by Lucius Piso; and before his time they knew not what it meant. But since that we have seen so many of them, and one still more rigorous than the other, so many have been found guilty, so many have been condemned, so great a war has

been raised in Italy, by those who feared the same fate; in fine, avarice and violence surmounting law and justice, have committed so many extortions and robberies, on our own allies, that if we still subsist, it may be said to be more owing to the weakness of others than to our own strength.”* To such vices in the body politic, the mind of Cicero, when consul, was directed: but Rome had reached that state, where medicine may alleviate, but cannot cure. It has been seen with what success he had reconciled, in some degree, the senate, with the body of the knights, and it was now that, to purify the elections, his law against bribery was proposed; by which an exile of ten years was made the penalty, and all shows of gladiators, within two years of suing for any magistracy, were prohibited. We do not doubt the wisdom of this law, and have more than once expressed an opinion of the debauching tendency of these shows; yet there is some difficulty in reconciling its enactments with its author’s very liberal defence of Muræna. Indeed it was a ground of Cato’s charge against Cicero, that having passed the law to which we refer, his participation in a cause where bribery was a principal offence, was not to be justified. The orator, however, as we understand him, did not look upon Muræna’s indulgence to the people, as amounting to corruption, within the range of the law in question.

This speech for Muræna, as also that for Rabirius, was made during the consulship. One would imagine that oppressed by cares of state at a moment of peril without parallel, a chief magistrate would have gladly withdrawn

*Sæpe me querentem, de feminarum, sæpe de virorum, nec de privatorum modo, sed etiam magistratum, sumptibus audistis; diversisque duobus vitiis, avaritia et luxuria, civitatem laborare; quæ pestes omnia magna imperia everterunt. Hæc ego quo melior, lætiorque in dies fortuna reipublicæ est imperiumque crescit: et jam in Græciam Asiamque transcendimus, omnibus libidinum illecebris repletas, et regias etiam attractamus gazas: eo plus horreo, ne illæ magis res nos ceperint, quam nos illas.—*Liv. lib. 34, cap. 4.* Nondum centum et decem anni sunt, cum de pecuniis repetundis a L. Pisone lata est lex, nulla antea cum fuisset, at vero postea tot leges et proximæ quæque duriores: tot rei, tot damnati, tantum italicum bellum propter judiciorum metum excitatum; tanta, sublatis legibus et judiciis, expilatio direptioque sociorum, ut imbecillitate aliorum, non nostra virtute valeamus.—*Cicero de Offic. L. 2. c. 21.*

from the contentions of the forum; and such may have been Cicero's desire; but the hour had arrived when there was need of all the legitimate powers of the government for its own protection, and knowing that a most salutary prerogative of the senate was assailed in the attempted punishment of Rabirius, who if criminal, was so in obedience to a decree of that body, the defence was the more readily undertaken as a duty enjoined by his dignity as consul; not strictly, it is true, but in the large and liberal view which such a man may be supposed to have taken of his trust.* And in defending Muræna, who was consul elect, though at a later period, a like motive swayed him; and it is a principal argument in his speech, that threatened with rebellion, it would be folly to deprive the city of a man who, from his great experience in war was exactly suited to the crisis. "But what," he exclaims, "will be the event if after baffling our endeavors, these dangers should recoil in the ensuing year? there will then be but one consul, who will be less employed in the management of war, than in the means of associating to himself a colleague; the barbarous, the dismal pestilence of Catiline's rebellion, will take every opportunity of breaking out. It now threatens the Roman people; it will speedily stretch to the fields near the walls of the city: fury will take up her abode in our camps, fear in our senate, conspiracy in our forum, an army in our fields, and desolation in our lands; while the terrors of fire and sword shall haunt every place of our domestic retirement. Yet these mischiefs may be easily crushed, should the state have the full compliment of her guardians, by the wisdom of her magistrates, and the zeal of her subjects." Again: "Amidst these important concerns and imminent dangers, it is incumbent upon you, Cato, who are not born for me, or for yourself, but for your country, to weigh well

*Rabirius had a long time before, when the senate had ordered the consuls, &c. to see that the republic received no detriment, [ut viderunt consules nequid rep detrimenti caperet] killed, as was charged, Saturninus, who was declared an enemy to the Roman state; and the prerogative of the senate, endangered by the prosecution was that, in virtue of which, the consuls, &c. were clothed with the sovereign power referred to.

the matter now before you, to preserve your assistant, your defender, your associate in the government; a consul not ambitious, a consul such as the present juncture requires, whose fortune disposes him to cherish tranquility, whose experience fits him for the affairs of war, and whose abilities and spirit are equal to every purpose you can desire.”*

In fine, we repeat that the admirer of Cicero may point to the consulate with pride; and with highest exultation to that part of it, when with admirable constancy and wisdom, his great faculties were devoted to the overthrow of a treason, menacing the happiness of mankind, and when as has been said of him he completely realized the prediction of the divine Plato, that “every state will be delivered of its calamities, when by the favor of fortune, great power unites with wisdom and justice in one person.”†

* *Pro Muræna*, xxviii, xxix. Muræna was charged by Sulpicius, whom he had beaten in their suit for the consulship, and by Cato, with a violation of the Calpurnian law, in encouraging the people to wait upon him when a candidate, in allotting seats to the several tribes at the shows of gladiators, and in inviting the people promiscuously to entertainments. This cause was distinguished not more for the uncommon dignity and integrity of the prosecutors, than by the high rank and eloquence of Muræna’s counsel. Hortensius and Crassus were joined with Cicero; and the story is, that the last was so anxious to eclipse the first, as entirely to lose his sleep the night preceding the trial, and to have in the argument appeared less than himself. The cause was argued in the year of Rome 690. Cicero in his 44th year.

† Plutarch.

SECTION III.

CICERO had now won the proudest titles that can wait upon humanity. Rome rescued by his care from a great calamity, and hailed himself, by acclamation, her saviour and father, it had been well, certainly for his repose, and we think for his fame, if less greedy of honor, or less anxious for his country, he had withdrawn from, or more sparingly mingled in, her councils. Upon his consulship, almost immediately, ensued dissensions afflicting to the republic, terminating only in its downfall, and fatal to himself. In these, the senate, in direct collision with the people, or rather with their aspiring leaders, a neutral course for such a man, was scarce practicable. With his great name and eloquence, his opinion and wishes could not fail to be regarded; and in fact, their weight and consequence were such, as to make his alliance a common object of desire. But to say the truth, on taking his seat upon the consular bench, although it may be, that in the outset, his whole heart was with the senate, and that in the integrity and wise exercise of its powers, he saw the strongest hope for the country, it does not appear, that his authority, great as it deservedly was, was at all times exerted, either to preserve the one or animate the other. Supposed by many of the ambitious to be hostile to all power, gained otherwise than through the ordinary forms of the constitution, he became at once an object of hatred and attack for those to whom that tardy process was displeasing; and when his rigor did relax, for his principles were far from inflexible, he was either the tool of prosperous faction, the dupe of superior cunning, or his interests and wishes had ceased to be important. With confidence in the destinies of his country,

much impaired, and professedly anxious to leave all cares of state, and turn himself entirely to philosophy, his neglect to do so, is only to be reconciled with an insatiable avidity for honor; a defect by high authority imputed to him, by himself in some degree acknowledged, and which his whole life discloses.*

The enmity of the factious was apparent at the close of the consulship, at which time the expiring consul usually delivered an address and made oath of having discharged his duties with fidelity. On this occasion, however, as we learn from Plutarch, there were some displeased with Cicero, and inclined to do him all possible injury: and we may suppose that Cæsar, who was one of them, if not acted upon by envy, was desirous to lessen the authority of a man, whose principles, as he then thought, were the most in the way of his ambition. Be this as it may, assisted by the tribune Metellus, he succeeded in preventing the address; upon which Cicero, abandoning the usual oath, adopted a new one of extraordinary character, the purport of which was, that he had saved his country and preserved the empire; † and though certainly chargeable with no excess of modesty, the oath thus modified, was warmly approved and responded to by the people. Cæsar, nevertheless, already industrious in removing every obstruction in his way to sovereignty, at which he is said from his earliest youth to have aimed, and jealous as we have seen of the authority and principles of Cicero, was in no way baffled by this expression of popular regard. He encouraged Metellus in all his vexatious attacks upon the late consul, whom that tribune was constantly reviling in his harangues to the people, as having when in power, deprived the citizen of life without the forms of trial; but the authority of the senate still prevailing for his protection, a law was next proposed recalling Pompey, and declaring the presence of that general necessary to settle the disorders growing out of the temerity and despotic power of Cicero.‡ Happily,

*Plutarch. Sum etiam avidior quam satis est gloriæ.—Ep. Fam. 9, 14, &c.

† In Piso. Ep. Fam. v. 2.

‡ Plutarch in Cic.

however, for him, as well as for the commonwealth, Cato, who was one of the tribunes, opposed and defeated it. Cicero had before made an attempt, through the women of his family, and particularly his sister who had married Pompey, to reconcile Metellus; and was the more anxious to avoid a collision, because of his own close relation of friendship with his cousin, whom the reader will recollect as having acted conspicuously in the great affair of Catiline; and it was not until after all these efforts were unavailing, that he attacked the tribune in the senate. His speech, however, is not extant.*

About this time he was deeply mortified at the total absence of all compliment in a letter he received from Pompey, to whom with no little care he had written an account of the conspiracy, and of his efforts to defeat it; and was greatly concerned lest that general, of whose influence he was again anxious to avail himself, should be prejudiced against him by Metellus, who had fled from Rome, and was now with the army. "In the mean time," he writes to Pompey, "it would not be agreeable to the openness of my temper, nor to the freedom of that mutual friendship we profess, to conceal what I thought wanting in your letter. I will acknowledge then, that the public service I performed in my late consulship, gave me reason to expect from your attachment both to myself and the commonwealth, that you would have sent me your congratulations; and I am persuaded you would not have omitted them, but from a tenderness to certain persons. Let me assure you, however, that what I have performed for the preservation of my country, has received the concurrent applauses of the whole world. You will find, when you return hither, that I conducted that important affair with so much spirit and policy, that you, like another Scipio, though far superior to that hero in glory, will not refuse to admit me, like a second Lælius, and not much behind him I trust in wisdom, as the friend and associate of your private and public transactions." It is we think clear from this letter, and many incidents in the life of its great writer, that with him,

* Middleton.

as with the generality of men, the quantum of reward which virtue is said to have in store for herself, had no very prominent share in animating his actions.*

Up to this period, Cicero, assailed as we have seen, and exposed to manifold vexations, was yet, by his character, the memory of past services, and the authority of the senate, protected from other injury. It was now, however, his fortune to incur the resentment of a man, who with industry, equal to his hate, succeeded at last in forcing him into exile. Publius Clodius, a man of illustrious birth, but infamous life, had about this time, added sacrilege to his other crimes of licentiousness, avarice, ill governed ambition and incest. He was enamoured of Pompeia, Cæsar's wife, who is supposed to have encouraged his passion; and to secure a stolen interview, was the object of his crime. Pompeia was celebrating the mystic sacrifices of the Bona Dea,† to which no male creature was ever admitted, and where every thing masculine was so scrupulously excluded that even pictures of that sort were covered during the ceremony.‡ In the dress of a woman, and assisted by one of the maids, Clodius entered the house; but was betrayed by his voice, and with difficulty escaped. This outrage to religion, in one of her most awful rites, was soon known and indignantly resented. It was at once determined that the offender should be prosecuted, and after some difficulty as to the mode of proceeding, reconciled by a proposition of Hortensius, he was tried by the Prætor, with a select bench of judges. The defence was that he was not in Rome at the time of the act charged, and evidence to that effect was produced. This, however, was repelled by the testimony of Cicero, who swore that Clodius was with him at his house, on the very day. No one doubted his guilt; and his acquittal was

* Few men have elevation of soul enough to love virtue for her own sake; but when she attracts the notice, and procures the favor of the prince, her natural beauty, seconded by rewards, resumes its rights in the human heart.—*Plin. Pan. 45.*

† The Bona Dea was supposed to have been a dryad with whom the god Faunus had an amour.—*Plutarch in Cæs.*

‡ ————Ubi velari, pictura ju betur.

Quaecunque alterius sexus imitata figuram est.—*Juv. 6. 339. Sen. Ep. 97.*

generally attributed to the venality of the bench, which, assisted by Crassus, the criminal had bribed.

Pompey had now returned in triumph from the Mithridatic war; and we are told by Plutarch that there was a general dread of his designs in this height of his power. Many feared that at the head of his army, he would take the government into his own hands; and there can be little question that in such a scheme, he might have prevailed. All fears, however, were dispelled when he disbanded his army, and approached Rome accompanied only with a private retinue. He had added three kingdoms, Pontus, Syria, and Bythinia, to the Roman empire, and left all the other nations tributary to the republic as far as the Tigris. Whilst abroad, in the career of his victories, he had not hesitated of his own will, to do much of an extraordinary nature, legislating for the whole east, parcelling at pleasure the vanquished kingdoms; building twenty-nine new cities or colonies; and distributing to each private soldier a considerable sum, and to his officers in proportion. On his return, his greatest anxiety was to secure a confirmation of these extraordinary acts; but though courted by the popular faction, which promised largely, he was the more backward in coming into their views, when he found that the authority of the senate was much respected, and that Cicero, notwithstanding the representations which had been made to him, was still in the highest estimation. He, therefore, lost no occasion in public, to extol his virtues, whilst at heart he regarded him with envy. We may judge from a letter to Atticus to what extent this artifice had succeeded. Pompey writes, Cicero "caresses, loves, commends me in public, but all this he does in such a manner, as plainly shows that he secretly hates me. *He has no good intentions towards the state*: has nothing about him of the gentleman, nothing of the honest man."*

In order to facilitate the ratification of his acts, Pompey now attempted with success, to procure the consulship for his creature Afranius, in every way unworthy of that high

trust, and upon whose elevation, none but a philosopher could look without a sigh;* and in the election, was guilty of most open bribery; fighting, as Cicero tells us, as did Philip of Macedon, who took every fortress into which a loaded ass might be driven.†

We may form a judgment of the value of Cicero's councils in preserving the authority of the senate, from the course he pursued at this juncture, in relation to a demand of the knights; of which he himself speaks as scarce fit to be endured, but which he not only bore with, but defended. "The company who hired the Asiatic revenues," he writes, "complained to the senate, that through too great eagerness they had given more for them than they were worth, and begged to be released from their bargain: I was their chief advocate. The thing was odious and shameful; but there was great reason to apprehend that if they should obtain nothing they would be wholly alienated from the senate." Then, after stating that he had no great reliance upon the concord, which in this measure he professed to have in view, he adds, "but I have provided myself another way, and a sure one I hope, of maintaining my authority; which I cannot well explain by letter, yet will give you a short hint of it. *I am in strict friendship with Pompey.* I know already what you say, and will be upon my guard as far as caution can serve me, and give you a further account some other time of my present conduct in politics."‡ Thus was Cicero, at a moment when every duty of a patriot enjoined that he should defend the constitution and laws from violation, in strict league with a man, whom he had a few days before denounced as void of all honest intentions towards the state, as no gentleman, and as shamefully polluting the elective franchise by his bribes. In the letter we have given, the acknowledged cause of his union with Pompey is, that his own personal authority might not be

* Consul est impositus nobis, quem nemo præter nos philosophos auspicere sine conspiratu posset.—*Ad. Att.* 1. 13.

†*Ad. Att.*

‡*Ib.* 1. xvii.

endangered. It is true, that when rebuked by Atticus, for even he was astonished, Cicero pretends to think that the safety of the state, as well as his individual dignity, was promoted by this friendship.

Some may think it wrong to condemn his support of the impudent demand of the knights, as the importance of concord between the two highest bodies in the government, may be supposed to have made it wise to sustain it; though it is certain that the undeviating patriot, Cato, thought otherwise, and prevailed to defeat it; but we can imagine no single motive other than a selfish one for the union with Pompey, which, strict enough before, became the closer when Clodius began to move in his scheme of revenge, and when Pompey, incensed by the opposition of the senate, found the increased importance of Cicero's services.

Soon after this union the first triumvirate* was formed. Its object was the accumulation of all power, and though we have no doubt that Cicero abhorred its designs, yet, as the reader will soon discover, he was at no distant period its most effective ally. The union of Cæsar and Pompey was cemented by the marriage of the latter with Julia, Cæsar's young and beautiful daughter. Our orator had dissuaded the alliance of the chiefs, and writes about this time to Atticus "that Pompey introduced universal confusion, and that there was no evil which might not be apprehended from him. *He manifestly aims at unlimited dominion.* What other inference is to be drawn from his extraordinary marriage, the division of the Campanian lands and his waste of the public money." On reading this letter, the question naturally suggests itself, could Cicero forbear, as one of the sentinels of the state, to exert his utmost eloquence in averting the perils he deprecates? There can be no question, as we think that such was his duty, at the hazard not only of his authority, but of his life; and there is still as little, that the true patriots Cato, Bibulus and the rest, in the midst of the greatest dangers, did

* Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus.

all that love of country could suggest, to check the growth of powers well known to be fatal; whilst he managed to be out of the way: retiring to a distant country seat.

During this retreat he writes as follows to Atticus: "Tell me every tittle of news, and since Nepos is leaving Rome, who is to have his brother's augurate; it is the only thing with which they could tempt me. Observe my weakness? But what have I to do with such things, to which I long to bid adieu and turn myself entirely to philosophy. I am now in earnest to do it, and wish that I had done so from the beginning."* Every one, save Dr. Middleton, has it is believed, condemned this letter as dishonorable; we leave it to the reader without comment.

Cicero, as far as history teaches us, in no one instance, befriended Rome at this decisive crisis, except in dissuading the union of Pompey with Cæsar; and not succeeding here, he appears to have, without the slightest other effort, abandoned in their greatest danger, the vital interests of his country; resting as we may suppose upon a favorite distinction, which enabled him to "bear with what he could not help, though not to approve what he ought to condemn."† In estimating, as we shall hereafter, his pretensions to the title of steadfast patriot, we should have been rejoiced to have given him the full benefit of his distinction; but we are at a loss to conceive with what propriety he could repose upon it, until by some effort at least of his prevailing eloquence, he found it to be applicable. Of that eloquence, he had himself no contemptuous opinion, and when fearlessly exerted had seen its saving power; and here surely, was a crisis, scarce less appalling than that of Catiline's treason, for its display. Why, it may well be asked, instead of retreating, did he not join the struggling Cato in resistance to a power to which he had himself, in every way contributed,‡ but which he saw, and indeed de-

* Ad. Att. 2. 5.

† Non enim est idem ferre si quid ferendum est, et probare si quid probandum non est.—*Ep. Fam.* x. 6.

‡ Pro. Lege. Man.

clared, was now sought to be extended to unlimited dominion. Had he done so, though it is probable defeat would have ensued, his high duty as a senator and patriot would then have been discharged, and none could have denied him the shelter of his distinction.

It is not easy to repress one's indignation when reading the letters to Atticus about this time in reference to the gallant and noble Cato. In the midst of his efforts to save his country, securing for him the applause of the virtuous to the end of time, Cicero professing the highest veneration, speaks of him as obstinate and wrong headed, and as acting as if he lived in the polity of Plato, not the dregs of Romulus.* It is very true, as some writer has observed, that it is better in human affairs to aim at that minor degree of good which is practicable, than to aspire to a perfection which is unattainable. Captious charges, however, against the patriot who aims as Cato did at the latter, come with but ill grace from the statesman who professes to find the former in passive obedience to atrocious faction; especially when, as was the case with Cicero, as will soon appear, the objector's sincerity is on the strongest grounds more than questionable.

Clodius was so exasperated when Cicero appeared in evidence against him, that he immediately resolved, if possible, to effect his ruin. To facilitate this, his great object was to be made a tribune, and not eligible to this office because of his patrician birth, he sought an adoption into a plebeian family, and succeeded. In this he was assisted by Pompey and Cæsar, the latter having shown no desire for his conviction when tried, though his own honor was immediately interested; and assigning as a reason for the divorce of Pompeia, that *his* wife should not only be free of guilt, but of suspicion. The truth is the power of Clodius with the people was of service to his ambition; a passion with

* Dicit enim tanquam in Platonis πολιτειᾷ, non tanquam in Romuli faece, sententiam.—*Ad. Att.* 2. 1.

Cæsar, to which conjugal as well as all other feeling was subjected.*

As tribune, by means of his illustrious connexions, an eloquence far from contemptible, the peculiar state of parties, and a succession of laws most grateful to the commonalty, the power of Clodius, though justly obnoxious to the honest, soon became inordinate; and the support of the consuls Piso and Gabinius was secured to him by decrees, giving to them the richest provinces of the empire. Of the triumvirate Crassus was the avowed enemy of Cicero; Pompey caressed both parties, and according to Plutarch, Cæsar, provoked at Cicero's refusal to accompany him as his lieutenant into Gaul, and probably his enemy since the affair of Catiline, encouraged Clodius against him, and declared that he had been guilty of flagrant violation of all law and justice, in putting Lentulus and Cethegus to death without the forms of trial. This was the tribune's charge: and here it cannot be denied that the conduct of Cicero was unworthy of his character, against all philosophy, and in every way abject. He let his hair grow and went about supplicating the people, and when met by his enemy, who took care to throw himself in his way, was disturbed

* There were at Rome various modes of adoption. That of which Clodius availed himself, was called *Arrogation*, and required the consent of the people. The form of application was: "Romans ye are entreated to consent that N. N. be declared to all intents and purposes of the law the son of N. N. as if he had been born to him in lawful wedlock; and that he may have over him the power of life and death, as a father has over his own son. This Romans is what you are entreated to confirm." The validity of such an adoption, as also of the simple one, depended upon several conditions: 1st. The person adopting was to be older than the person adopted: 2d. He was to have no children nor hopes of any: 3d. The honor, religion and domestic worship of the two families should receive no prejudice, and 4th. There should be neither fraud nor collusion, nor other end proposed than the natural effect of such adoption. If the college of Pontiffs presented no obstacle, it was referred to the decision of the citizens. In the case of Clodius, most, if not all these prerequisites were not only not gratified, but grossly violated.

Dr. Middleton, on the authority of Suetonius, informs us that Cæsar was so provoked, when Cicero in his defence of his late colleague in the consulship, who was prosecuted about this time, complained so freely of the times and the oppression of the republic that he immediately favored the law for the adoption, and had it ratified through all its forms in three hours from the time of Cicero's speech,

in all his applications, and pelted with dirt and stones. In his distress he applied to Pompey; but that general, though he implored his aid upon his knees, was too far leagued with Cæsar, whose beautiful daughter he had married, and was inexorable. He next thought to remain and disarm the tribune by force, to which step Lucullus advised him; but yielded finally to the entreaties of his friends and family, and went into exile; a determination which he afterwards bitterly lamented, and does not scruple to impute to cowardice. The rage of his enemy not yet sated, he immediately procured a decree interdicting him from fire and water, forbidding all on pain of death to harbor or receive him, and making all attempt to recall him highly penal. In addition, all his houses were demolished, his moveables shared by the consuls, and to make the loss of his house in Rome irretrievable, the area on which it stood was consecrated to the perpetual service of religion, and a temple built upon it to the goddess Liberty.*

In that part of the life of Cicero in which Plutarch treats of his exile, it is hinted that Clodius was much strengthened in his efforts to ruin him, by the load of enmity incurred in the indulgence of his wit; and we do not wonder, from the specimens which that delightful author has preserved, that such was its result. It seems to have been indiscriminate, and levelled not merely at crimes and foibles, but to have sometimes wantoned with but little feeling, even where infirmities of nature were its subject. We think, however, that the secret of his misfortune may be seen in the vast reputation he had secured by his unexampled services when consul, in his consequent authority at Rome, and in the absence of subserviency to *all* the men in power. However devoted to Pompey, it does not appear that at this time he was willing by an alliance to have secured the favor or protection of Cæsar, whose influence if exerted might have saved him, and who in fact mainly contributed to his banishment; and there is† reason to think that he

* de leon.

† Ad. Att. 2. 3. De Provinc. Consular 17,

might have shared the empire with the triumvirate itself. The enemy, however, at this juncture of its designs, he was not only left by it to the rage and hatred of the tribune, but its own strength and influence were rather at the service of that demagogue. Hence, though we think that the union of Cicero with Pompey is utterly indefensible, and know it to have been prompted by no respect for his character, but rather from a desire to shield himself from the malice of those whom he was pleased to think his enemies: yet we cannot but believe that if his temporising course had not been confined to one chief, and had embraced Cæsar, his exile might have been averted.*

But although satisfied that at this period his public character was comparatively untarnished, we have no intention to deny, that in this extremity, his unworthy tears and repinings were most disgraceful to his philosophy; and are free to confess that the calamity and the terrors it excited, destroyed the balance of his mind; and that he was driven by his sufferings not only to an immediate and positive injustice to others, but to all the subsequent irresolution of his life. In his letters, when abroad, we find him taxing his friends, and Hortensius† in particular, with the most unprincipled motives in advising his retreat; denouncing his own folly, and even cowardice in yielding to their counsel: and yet afterwards extolling his withdrawal, as not only uninfluenced by fear, but as imperiously demanded by a paramount regard for the republick. In short we believe that the leading frailties of his nature were completely developed by his misfortune, and that after his re-

* Pompey, Marcus Crassus, and Julius Cæsar, all envied the glory Cicero had acquired by putting an end to the conspiracy of Catiline; for which reason Pompey suffered him to be banished by Clodius, when he might easily have prevented it. But when Pompey understood that the senators and all the Roman knights were angry with him for negligence to succor a man, to whom he and they had been so much obliged, and when he saw that the same danger threatened him from Clodius, he made a motion to the senate to recall Cicero, (though the Clodian law had expressly forbidden any person whatever to do so,) and made mention of his character with the greatest reverence and honor.—*Guthrie*.

† *Me summa simulatione amoris, summa assiduitate quotidiana sceleratissime, in audiosissimeque tractavit, adjuncto etiam Arrio, quorum ego consiliis, promissis, præceptis destitutus in hanc calamitatem incidi.*—*Ad Quint. Frat. l. 3.*

turn, there is in his connexion with the state much to lament and little to admire.

His reception abroad was such as might have been anticipated. In some of the cities, mindful of his character and unequalled services, he was met with distinguished kindness, and even honors; but by others, and by individuals greatly bound to him, his stay was either at once discountenanced, or his treatment suited to his fallen fortunes. Beloved of the Sicilians, their island was naturally selected as his resting place; but driven away by the governor, an ancient friend, the welcome of that people was unavailing; when, after some time spent in anxious doubt, he repaired to the province of Macedonia, where he passed the far greater part of his exile, unmolested by the governor and befriended by his quæstor. We learn from his letters how infinite was his grief in this extremity. He often complains that he was almost prevented from writing at all, by floods of tears; and indeed he in every way far more than realized the truth of that sentiment of the moralist, "that in the hour of deep distress, and under the pressure of severe afflictions the philosopher and the peasant are nearly upon a level."*

An illustrious nobleman of the past age who suffered a like calamity, has well described the bearing of our orator in exile. "This great man," says Bolingbroke, "who had been the saviour of his country, who had feared in the support of that cause neither the insults of a desperate party nor the daggers of assassins, when he came to suffer from the same cause, sunk under the weight. He dishonored that banishment which indulgent providence meant to be the means of rendering his glory complete. Uncertain where he should go, or what he should do, fearful as a woman, and froward as a child, he lamented the loss of his rank and splendid popularity. His eloquence served only to paint his misery in stronger colors. He wept over the ruins of his fine house which Clodius had demolished, and his separation from Terentia, whom he repudiated not long

after, was perhaps an affliction to him at this time. Every thing becomes intolerable to the man, who is once subdued by grief. He regrets what he took no pleasure in enjoying, and overloaded already, he sinks at the weight of a feather. Cicero's behavior in short, was such that his friends, as well as enemies, believed him to have lost his senses. Cæsar beheld with a secret satisfaction the man who had refused to be his lieutenant, weeping under the rod of Clodius, Pompey hoped to find some excuse for his own ingratitude in the contempt to which the friend whom he had abandoned, exposed himself. Nay, Atticus judged him too nearly attached to his former fortunes and reproached him for it. Atticus, even Atticus, blushed for Tully, and the most plausible man alive assumed the style of Cato.*

We can have no pleasure in dwelling upon the "littleness of spirit which Cicero discovered in his banishment unworthy a man that had enjoyed such opportunities of cultivation from letters and philosophy;"† and we, therefore, hasten to his return. Could any doubt exist, that without powerful aid, independent of his own control with the people, the enraged tribune could never have forced his enemy from Rome, it would be dispelled by the circumstances attending his return. Clodius, proud of his success, and too confident of his power, had attacked the patricians, and attempted to annul some of the acts of Pompey himself, and about this time incurred the anger of that general, to whose connivance he was mainly indebted for his influence, by the seizure of a son of king Tigranes, detained a prisoner in Rome. By this affront, Pompey was roused to exert himself in Cicero's behalf, and after repeated efforts, though often frustrated by the indefatigable tribune, a decree passed the senate, and being confirmed by the people with circumstances of unusual honor, the exile returned in triumph.

Cicero's own account of his return, though much inflated, is strictly true. So enchanted were the people at his recall

* *Reflec. on Exile*, 253.

* *Plutarch*.

that when it was known that he was approaching, "all his route," he tells us, "from Brundisium to Rome, was lined with a continued file of the different people of Italy. There was no district," he adds, "no city, which sent not deputations to congratulate me. What shall I say of the manner of my reception on my arrival at every place? how from the cities and from the villages, fathers of families with their wives and children, either went before me, or appeared on the road to testify their joy? What shall I say of the festivals that were celebrated on my account, with as much gladness and pomp, as those which are consecrated to the immortal gods? But above all, the day that I entered Rome; that day alone is worth an immortality. On that day, I had the senate and the whole people, receive me without the gates of Rome; and Rome herself, shaking from her foundations, seemed to advance to embrace her preserver. One would have said that not only the men and women, of all ages, of every rank and condition, but the walls themselves and the temples entered into transports of joy at my approach." And again: "The whole procession was so triumphant from beginning to end, that I had reason to fear, lest people should imagine that I myself had contrived my late flight for the sake of so glorious a restoration."*

On his return, Cicero, in the senate and before the peo-

* In Pis. Pro Dom. 28. "When any magistrate of distinction returned from his province, they thronged out of the city in crowds to receive him; and they attended him to his house, adorning the avenues to it with verdure and festoons. They crowded also to meet an illustrious exile when he was recalled. It was in some sort to make reparation for the injustice they had done him. Metellus Numidicus driven from Rome by the faction of Marius, because of his firmness and rectitude, having been recalled from exile, where he lived always equal to himself, when it was known he was near arriving, the senate and the people, the rich and the poor, in a word, the whole city hastened to meet him: in so much, as an historian says, that no dignity nor triumph ever did him more honor than did the very cause of his exile, the wisdom of his conduct while in it, and lastly the glory of his return." [Pri. Life. Rom.] Demosthenes was not equal to himself in exile, into which unlike Cicero, he was deservedly sent. His return, like that of the Roman, was triumphant. "Happier," says he, "was my return than that of Alcibiades. It was through compassion that the Athenians restored him, but me they have recalled through a motive of kindness." The whole body of the citizens went to meet his galley and congratulate him,—*Plut. in Dem.*

ple, was profuse in thanks to all those who had in any way contributed to his recall; and prompted, as is said, by fervent gratitude to Pompey, pronounced him "the greatest man for wisdom, virtue, glory, who was then living or had lived, or ever would live, and declared that he owed more to him, on that occasion, than was lawful almost for one man to owe another."* It had been well for his country and for himself, had his tribute to this friend been limited to praise; but now, were strikingly displayed, the timidity and irresolution, to use no harsher phrase, which marked his after life, which we believe to have been natural to him, and which, as we have surmised, were developed by his exile. One would imagine from his acts at the time of his return, and for a long time afterwards, that he lived but for Pompey and his friends. There was at this period a scarcity of corn, and it was chiefly through his means, that to provide relief, Pompey was entrusted with a commission far more than commensurate with the distress, and eminently dangerous in the then state of Rome, as familiarizing the people with absolute power in one man, and as leading in consequence to a contempt of the authority of the senate. Not long after another grant was made to Pompey, giving to him proconsular power for five years, throughout the whole Roman dominions. Cicero, though he acknowledged that this last act was a power too exorbitant in a free state,† suffered it to pass in silence, and confessedly upon the ground, that the pontifical college had not determined upon the validity of Clodius's consecration of his area, and that Pompey might influence its decision. If at any one moment the authority of the senate should have been protected, it was at that particular juncture; and this he must have known and felt, if familiar with, and opposed as he is said to have been, to the designs of the triumvirate. In adding to the power of Pompey, he gave great color to the charge of Clodius, that he was ungratefully deserting the senate, to make his court to the man

* Post red, ad Quir. 7.

† Ad Sul. et Cæc. et Tor.—*Ep. Fam.*

who had betrayed him. Be this so or not, and we incline to believe it, it is in feeding a power he knew to be dangerous, that we see cause of blame; and cannot suppose him so senseless as to have thought that the authority of the senate was unaffected by such grants. Indeed we have his own admission that it was otherwise.*

Nor, as we have said, was his gratitude confined in its munificence to Pompey. Soon after the grants to that general, we see another extraordinary concession to Cæsar, made principally through the influence of Cicero. Cæsar was then in Gaul, and had written to the senate, requesting a variety of extravagant powers, as well as the prolongation of his command. The demand was thought exorbitant, and was disgusting to the old patriots; but our orator sustaining it, was assented to. In another matter, he had succeeded in frustrating for a time, a project of Cæsar to divide the Campanian lands among the poor citizens; from a conviction that it was not expedient,† and with a knowledge, we doubt not, that Cæsar's view was to enhance his already alarming power. His independent course on this occasion, was highly pleasing to the enemies of the triumvirate, who derived from it a hope, that a breach would ensue between him and Pompey; yet on the first remonstrance of Cæsar, backed by the entreaties of his son-in-law, he determined at once to drop the affair in dread of their joint resentment.

In ceasing to oppose this division of land, Cicero writes, "I could not but think that having performed and suffered so much for my country, that I might now, at least, be permitted to consider what was due to gratitude, and to the honor of my brother: and as I had ever conducted myself with integrity towards the public, I might be allowed, I hope, to act the same honest part in my more private connexions." Such a reason is discountenanced in other parts of his works, and has indeed met his positive condemnation.‡

* Ep. Fam. ad Sul. et Cæc. et Torq.

† Middleton, 2. 52. 54.

‡ Hæc prima lex in amicitia sancitur, ut neque rogemus res turpes, nec faciamus rogati.—*De Amicitia*, cap. 12.

For ourselves, we have no difficulty in believing with Melmoth, that fear determined this change in his conduct, and that having once suffered in the cause of liberty, he was not disposed to be twice a martyr; the rather as we know that he had condemned this very measure as a scheme formed for the destruction of the commonwealth.* Again, in allusion to this extraordinary change, he observes, "that he had no reason to apprehend a charge of inconstancy, if on some occasions he voted and acted a little differently from what he used to do, in *complaisance to such a friend*; that his union with Pompey, necessarily included Cæsar, with whom he and his brother had a friendship of long standing, which they were invited to renew by all manner of civilities and good offices, freely offered on Cæsar's part: that after Cæsar's great exploits, the republic itself seemed to interpose and forbid him to quarrel with such men."†

Not content with upholding Cæsar's acts, which his judgment confessedly condemned, he wrote about this time a poem in his praise; and we present a letter to Atticus, in relation to it, in further proof of his complaisance to a man, of whose inordinate and bad ambition he had not a doubt. He excuses his omission to send the poem, on the ground that Cæsar pressed to have it, and that he had reserved no copy; though to confess the truth, he says, "he found it very difficult to digest the meanness of recanting his old principles. But adieu to all right true honest councils; it is incredible what perfidy there is in those who want to be leaders; and who really would be so, if there was any faith in them." And after further animadversion upon those with whom he had acted, he adds, "But since those who have no power, will not love me, my business is to acquire the love of those who have; you will say, I wish that you had done it long ago; I know you wished it, and I was a mere ass for not minding you."‡

No one, on reading the letter, part of which follows, can be surprised that a man with such views, should lend

* Ad. Att. 2. 17.

† Ep. Fam. 1. 9.

‡ Ad. Att. iv. v.

himself to power. It was written a short time after having sustained the exorbitant demands of Cæsar, in relation to his government of Gaul. That "the state and form of the government was quite changed, and what he had proposed to himself as the end of all his toils, a dignity and liberty of acting, quite lost and gone: that he had dropped, therefore, all thoughts of that old consular gravity and character of a resolute senator, and resolved to conform himself to Pompey's will; that his great affection for Pompey made him begin to think all things right which were useful to him." And it would seem from another part of this letter, that he thought himself obliged to remain in public life, though anxious to withdraw, for the sole purpose of promoting Pompey's wishes; "or else what of all things he most desired, if his friendship with Pompey would permit him to retire from public business, and give himself wholly up to books." Again he says, "you are sensible, nevertheless, how difficult it is to renounce our old and habitual notions of politics, especially under a full sense of their rectitude.*

The exploits of Cæsar had now nearly raised him to a level in point of authority with Pompey, and it was agreed upon by the triumvirate, which was nothing less than a traitorous "conspiracy of three of the most powerful citizens in Rome, to extort from their country by violence, what they could not obtain by law;"† that Pompey and Crassus should seize upon the consulship for the next year, though they had not declared within the usual time. In the disorders ensuing upon so irregular an attempt, Cicero managed to be out of the way; and writes thus to Atticus of his determination as to the course he should pursue. As usual, power, however atrocious, was to prevail with him. "Shall I withdraw myself then," says he, "from business, and retire to the port of ease? That will not be allowed to me. Shall I follow these leaders, and having refused to command, submit to be commanded? I will do so: for I see that it is your advice, and wish that I had always fol-

* Ep. Fam. 1. 9.

† Middleton.

lowed it; or shall I resume my post, and enter again into affairs? I cannot persuade myself to that, but begin to think Philoxenus in the right, who chose to be carried back to prison rather than commend the tyrant's verses. This is now what I am meditating: to declare my dislike, at least, of what they are doing."* We shall soon discover how far the dithyrambic poet was his model.

Gabinus and Cicero were upon the worst terms; and between him and Crassus there was any thing but a relation of friendship. They had disliked each other since the conspiracy of Catiline, and their animosity was now rekindled by a debate in the senate, relating to Gabinus, in which Crassus, as his friend, had indulged in the severest reflections upon Cicero. Here, as in the affair of the Campanian lands, the enemies of the triumvirate had great hopes that Cicero would be embroiled with it. Most of the chiefs of the senate were, for this reason, delighted at the quarrel; but again yielding to the omnipotent prayer of Pompey and his father in law, he was soon reconciled to their partner Crassus; with what zeal, we may judge from the substance of a letter to Crassus, whilst absent, in the fatal war against Parthia. After an account of the debate, in which he had sustained his demands, he tells him that he had given proof to the whole city, of the sincerity of his reconciliation, assures him of his resolution to serve him, with all his pains, authority, interest, in every thing great or small, which concerned himself, his friends, or clients; and bids him look upon his letter, as a league of amity, which on his part should be inviolably preserved.† Thus was Cicero in strict amity with all three of the worst enemies of Rome, having been long the ardent friend of Pompey, for some time engaged in a correspondence of particular intimacy with Cæsar, and now reconciled to Crassus.‡

But we are yet to notice the strongest instances of span-

* Ad. Att. iv. v.

† Ep. Fam. 5, viii.

‡ After the death of Crassus, Cicero published an oration, charging him with a participation in the conspiracy of Catiline, and had before spoken of him in terms of the utmost contempt, to Atticus. Ad. Att. 4. xiii. We have no doubt that he hated the father, who, as is known, was killed in this expedition; but there seems to have been a mutual and sincere friendship between him and the son, who also fell in Parthia.

iel devotion to Pompey. Vatinius, in every way profligate, and particularly fierce in his enmity to Cicero, was now accused of plundering the province of Sardinia. Of this man he had before said that no one could look upon him without a sigh, or speak of him without execration; that he was the dread of his neighbors, the disgrace of his kindred, and the utter abhorrence of the public in general: nor was he alone in this estimate of his character; others have represented him as a prodigy of vice and worthlessness; yet as Pompey befriended him, in opposition to the patriot Cato, who without success, sued for the prætorship, with Vatinius as his competitor, Cicero did not hesitate to prostitute his eloquence in his defence.

There were also many accusations against Gabinius, on his return from his province. The first indictment charged, that in defiance of religion, and a decree of the senate, he had restored the king of Egypt with an army, leaving his own province, Syria, naked.* Dr. Middleton tells us that Cicero had been long deliberating whether he should not himself accuse Gabinius; and to us it seems, that there was

*It was discovered by those who were opposed to the restoration of the Egyptian monarch, that there was a prophecy of the Sibyl which forbade his restoration with an army. Ptolemy, wearied out by so long a delay, withdrew from Rome. Pompey advised him to apply to Gabinius, then proconsul of Syria, who was of infamous character, and would do any thing for money. Bribed by the king with 10,000 talents, against the positive order of the senate, not to leave his province without permission, Gabinius restored him. Lentulus, governor of Cyprus and Cilicia, who had been the active friend of Cicero in the affair of his recall, was desirous of being chosen to restore this king; and Cicero was his friend in the senate. It is remarkable that in one of his letters he advises him, against the oracle and will of the senate, if he was well satisfied of his being able to render himself master of Egypt, not to delay his march for a moment: "but if," he writes, "you are doubtful of success, it is our advice [Pompey was with him in the advice] that you by no means make the attempt;" and also says, "we deem it necessary to add, that we are sensible the world will judge of the propriety of this scheme, entirely by the event. Should it succeed as we wish, your policy and resolution will be universally applauded, and on the other hand, should it miscarry, it will undoubtedly be condemned as an action of ill considered and unwarrantable ambition."—*Ep. Fam.* 1. 7. But what has well elicited surprise is, that Cicero should afterwards, in one of his philippics, denounce conduct in Antony, who was one of the advisers of Gabinius, exactly similar to that which he urges upon Lentulus. "Inde iter ad Alexandriam contra senatus auctoritatem, contra rempublicam et religiones." He also in the speech against Piso, abuses Gabinius in no measured terms, for the act in question. Indeed, Cicero was no way backward, if it suited an emergency, to condemn and approve the very same transaction,

in truth, but little cause of hesitation; as he had no doubt of his guilt, and was in this first stage of the proceeding himself a witness against him. Besides, he had received from him every provocation which one man could receive from another. Gabinius escaped this charge, but was soon after tried for the plunder of his province; and one would suppose that Cicero would have been the last to defend a man, whom he detested, and who had often in every possible manner provoked and injured him.* Yet even here, the power of Pompey and his later friend, prevailed. "Pompey," says he, "labors hard with me, but has yet made no impression, nor if I retain a grain of liberty, ever will." The impression, however, was made, and the defence undertaken. We know nothing more loathsome in his accumulated concessions; and see nothing justificatory in the reasons he urges for his general conduct, in the apologetical letter to Lentulus. Such reasons might well have weighed with him, as with any honest man, in not exasperating an irresistible power; but do not we think authorise so absolute homage, far less addition to such power. "The union," he writes, "of all the honest which subsisted when you left Rome, confirmed by my consulship, and revived by yours, is now quite broken and deserted by those who ought to have supported it, and were looked upon as patriots: for which reason, the maxims of all wise citizens, in which class I always wished to be ranked, ought to be changed too; for it is a precept with Plato, whose authority has the greatest weight with me, to contend in public affairs, as far as we can persuade our citizens, but not to offer violence either to our parent or our country. If I was quite free from all engagements, I should act, therefore, as I now do; should not think it prudent to contend with so great a power; nor if it could be effected, to extinguish it in our present circumstances; nor continue always in one mind, when the things themselves, and the sentiments of the honest are altered; since a perpetual adherence to the same measures, has never been approved by those who know best how to

* Gabinius had assisted Clodius in banishing him.

govern states; but as in sailing, it is the business of art to be directed by the weather, and foolish to persevere with danger in the course in which we set out, rather than by changing it to arrive with safety, though later, where we intended: so to us who manage public affairs, the chief end proposed being dignity with public quiet, our business is not to be always saying, but always aiming at the same thing: wherefore, if all things, as I said, were wholly free to me, I should be the same man that I now am; but when I am invited to this conduct, on the one side, by kindness, and driven to it on the other by injuries, I easily suffer myself to vote an act what I take to be useful both to myself and the republic: and I do it the more freely, as well on the account of my brother's being Cæsar's lieutenant, as that there is not the least thing which I have ever said or done for Cæsar, but that he has repaid with such eminent gratitude as persuades me that he takes himself to be obliged to me. So that I have as much use of all his power and interest, which you know to be the greatest, as if they were my own; nor could I otherwise have defeated the designs of my desperate enemies, if to those forces I have always been master of, I had not joined the favor of the men in power."* The wisdom of some of the principles disclosed in this letter, cannot be successfully arraigned; and we can well imagine, that inflexibility of opinion, at all times and under all circumstances, may operate injury in the government of a state; but there is strong and satisfactory cause to doubt the sincerity of the writer, when insisting, that for his own conduct, he found a sanction in such principles. Indeed we find a lamentable amount of proof in his letters, that he deemed himself dishonored by his course; and in our view, such of them as appear in this part of these pages, show to demonstration, that his devotion to this triumvirate was not only not involuntary, as is pretended, but that it was opposed to every consideration of public good, and to a most shameful extent, spontaneous. Besides, there is

* Ep. Fam. 1. ix,

abundant proof that he deemed resistance at this very period the glorious part of a generous patriot.*

His enthusiastic regard for Plato is well known; having prompted him on all occasions to extol his maxims, and on one, indeed, to declare that he would rather err with him than go right with others.† It is not for us to question the excellence of his model; but we have no hesitation in denying the applicability of that rule of the philosopher, relied on in the letter to Lentulus, "that we should never contend in public affairs further than we can persuade our citizens, nor offer violence to our parent or country;" and we do so because there was not the slightest real effort on the part of Cicero to persuade resistance to injurious grants, but on the contrary, the usurpers were sooner or later sustained in all their flagitious demands. The rule of Plato contemplates in terms, contention to some extent, and does not authorize surrender to faction until persuasion has been found to fail. Had Cicero endeavored, without success, to restore the union of the honest, of the breach of which he complains, or had he with like want of success, attempted, by resistance, to reclaim the factious from desperate councils, and not sought to do so, as he is said to have done, by gratifying their thirst of power, through voluntary grants of it, a dread of violence to his country would then perhaps have made continued opposition, not less wrong than it was unavailing; but the post of a patriot would be a sinecure indeed, were the mere apprehension of further evil to do away with the necessity of any the least attempt to remove that which is present, and in itself grievous; or, in other words, were he permitted to succumb to usurpation without taking a single step to ascertain whether it is in reality or not irresistible. It may be said that the inutility of resistance was apparent in Cato's repeated defeats; but of all men, our orator could with the least grace have rested upon such reasoning: as the true guardian of a state, the character he affected, does not content himself with other men's

*Ep. Fam. 2. 7.

† Errare mehercule malo cum Platone quam cum istis vera sentire.

efforts. Moreover, Cato's means were, alas, unequal to his exalted designs, and could any thing on earth have made his virtue available, it would have been the alliance of Cicero's eloquence; but here, unfortunately, instead of a willing ally, it found an opposing bawd.

The orator's entire conduct in reference to the division of the Campanian lands, to which we not long since referred, goes far to show, that if properly opposed, the triumvirs were not omnipotent; and at the same time hopelessly deprives him of any benefit whatever from Plato's rule; for in this affair of the lands, his only show of opposition was actually successful; and Middleton tells us, led to universal joy; nor was it withdrawn, as we have seen, from dread of violence to his country, but confessedly from complaisance to Pompey, and admiration of Cæsar's great exploits. In a word, it is manifest that he did not look on opposition as fruitless, though disliking Cato's manner of it.*

With regard to his frequent appeals to the wisdom of Plato, in his own justification, we cannot but think, from the view we have taken of the character and sentiments of that philosophic statesman, that had he lived after Cicero, he would have been slow indeed to point to him as the perfect citizen to whom to adjudge his prize of virtue;† though we confess, that during the consulate, and in the foreign government, of which we shall soon treat, the Roman did realize not a few of his precepts.

In reviewing Cicero's course as a statesman, as we shall do when descanting upon his character, we must necessarily recur to his measures, at this juncture; meanwhile, we cannot better extend our view of the apologetical letter, also the subject of future enquiry, than in transcribing a short commentary upon it, for which Melmoth professes to be indebted to a friend. "It is observable that the principles by which Cicero attempts to justify himself in this epistle, are such as will equally defend the most abandoned

* Ad, Att. 2. 1. Ep. Fam. 2. 5.

† Plato, fifth book of laws.

prostitution and desertion in political conduct. Personal gratitude and resentment, an eye to private and particular interests, mixed with a pretended regard to public good; an attention to a brother's advancement, and further favor; a sensibility in being caressed by a great man in power; a calculation of the advantages derived from the popularity and credit of that man to one's own personal self, are very weak foundations, indeed, to support the superstructure of a true patriot's character: yet these are the principles which Cicero here expressly avows and defends."

The expression of sorrow, in the following letter, seems to have drawn a somewhat unfriendly admission, even from Dr. Middleton.

"I am afflicted, my dearest brother—I am afflicted that there is no republic, no justice in trials; that this season of my life, which ought to flourish in the authority of the senatorian character, is either wasted in the drudgery of the bar, or relieved only by domestic studies; that what I have ever been fond of from a boy,

"In every virtuous act and glorious strife,
To shine the first and best,"

is now wholly lost and gone; that my enemies are partly not opposed, partly defended by me; and neither what I love, nor what I hate, left free to me."

That Cicero deeply lamented his lost sway in the public councils, is very manifest; but, assuming, as we think we may, the insincerity of the letter to Lentulus, we can imagine no other fetters upon his free agency, than those which ambition or fear imposed; and as to the virtuous contentions, the want of which he deploras, what else had he to do, but to cease whining, and come to the rescue of his suffering country? Had he been fearless, the world could not have offered him strife more glorious; and this he not only knew, but acknowledged.

About this time he writes: "I am under the sad necessity either of tamely submitting to the sentiments of those few who lead the republick, or of imprudently joining in a

weak and fruitless opposition." If such were the alternative, may it not well be asked, could a statesman of high principles in political conduct, have hesitated to withdraw? Could he without dishonor, submit to so degrading an alternative? Melmoth very sensibly suggests the proper course; and gives us an extract from Sir William Temple, as applicable. "An honest physician," says that writer, "is excused for leaving his patient when he finds the disease growing desperate; and can by his attendance, expect only to receive his fees, without any hopes or appearance of deserving them."

"As to your inquiry," says Cicero to Lentulus, "concerning the situation of public affairs, there are great divisions among us; but the zeal and prudence of the several parties are by no means equal. Those who enjoy the largest share of wealth and power [Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus] have gained a superiority of credit likewise, by the folly and instability of their antagonists; for they have obtained from the senate with very little opposition, what they had no hopes of receiving even from the people, without raising great disturbances. Accordingly the house has voted Cæsar a sum of money for the payment of his army, together with a power of nominating ten lieutenants; as they have also, without the least difficulty, dispensed with the Sempronian law for appointing him a successor. I do but slightly touch upon these particulars, as I cannot reflect upon our affairs with any satisfaction." A stranger to Cicero would doubtless conclude, that he had withstood these grants, of which he so earnestly complains; but so far from it, he informs us in a speech made about the time, wherein the very grants are enumerated, that he was their principal author;* and it will be seen that at the commencement of the civil war, he made it a merit with Cæsar, that he had in all things sustained his dignity.

Upon the whole, we cannot, on an impartial view of these and other letters of Cicero, hesitate to approve the

*"Harum ego sententiarum et princeps et auctor fui," [Pro Balbo, 27.]

judgment of the best of his contemporaries,* that in his relations with Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus, there was a mean and voluntary submission to illegal power; and we moreover think that there was not only submission to this power, but an apparent constant and anxious effort to ensure its stability; the more indefensible, as we know him to have been familiar with the designs of the triumvirs, and find him afterwards boasting, that he had foreseen, as from an eminence, most, if not all the calamities, which followed upon the irregular powers his fear, or if we will, his gratitude, contributed to build up.† In short, we think that his league with these the worst enemies of Rome, was not more opposed to patriotism, than to common honor, and that it is the less to be pardoned; as if upon his return, with an authority secured to him by his renown, majestic eloquence, services and recent suffering, he had manfully vindicated the ancient dignity and liberties of his oppressed country; though he may not have saved her—as that was beyond the reach of human intellect or wisdom—her fall might at least have been delayed; and at all events, his own great name preserved to us, rescued from much and deep reproach, and with the true patriot's glory.‡

For some years after his exile, Cicero was more than ordinarily engaged in the duties of the bar. His fortune, though in a mutilated state, restored to him, he passed all the leisure he could command, at his different villas, and in the second year after his return prepared the piece called the complete orator. This admirable work, says Dr. Middleton, remains entire, “a standing monument of Cicero's parts and abilities, which, while it exhibits to us the idea of a perfect orator, and marks out the way by which he formed himself to that character, explains the reason likewise, why nobody has since equalled him, or ever will, till there be found again united, what will hardly be found

*Bibulus, Marcellinus, Cato, Favonius and others.

†Phil. 2. Ad. Cæc. et Sul.—*Ep. Fam.* Ad. Att. x. iv.

‡The course of conduct, and its exalted reward here suggested, were pursued and won by Cato, of whom it has been said, that if he could not save, he prolonged the life of liberty.—*Letters on Patriotism.*

singly in any man, the same industry and the same parts." It was also about this time a treatise on politics was prepared, and not long after he was chosen to fill a vacancy in the college of Augurs.

The next important event in the life of Cicero was the masterly defence of Milo. For this man he seems to have cherished a warm and constant friendship; and now gave an illustrious proof of it in a powerful and most eloquent effort in his behalf, when tried for the murder of Clodius. Of all the enemies of that detestable tribune, and few among the honest were his friends, Milo had been most zealous in counteracting his designs. Their hatred of each other was undisguised, and had been repeatedly shown in mutual threats about the time of the accidental encounter, which terminated fatally to Clodius. They met at a short distance from the city; Clodius with a retinue of friends and servants on horseback, and Milo also well attended, accompanied by his wife, Fausta, and Marcus Fusius his friend, in a chariot. The quarrel beginning with the servants was soon shared by all; and Clodius wounded, was finally overpowered. He succeeded in retreating to a public house, but was, together with the landlord, slain. A number of his men were also killed, and his own body remained in the road, until taken by a senator passing that way, to Rome.* The utmost confusion prevailed in the city in consequence of the murder, the body was exposed in the forum, and consumed in a fire kindled with the furniture of the courts of justice, themselves destroyed. Pompey, who was then sole consul, procured the appointment of a special commission, over which a judge of consular rank was to preside, to try Milo; and was indeed the principal cause of his ruin: but Cicero on this occasion seems not to have been awed by his power, to have undertaken the defence with a zeal equal to his eloquence, and to have shown in the cause of friendship an intrepidity often less obvious in the higher claims of his country. Such was his constancy, says Asconius,* "that

* Asconius lived in the time of Vespasian, and besides some historical treatises, wrote annotations on Cicero's orations.

neither the loss of popular favor, nor Pompey's suspicions, nor his own danger, nor the terror of arms, could divert him from the resolution of undertaking Milo's defence."

The unusual solemnity attendant upon this trial, with the array of arms in the forum, is said to have so agitated the orator that Milo was greatly apprehensive he would lose the benefit of his powers; and that fearful of some such effect from the display, he desired his advocate to approach the place of trial in a litter, "for he was not only timid in war, but had his fears when he spoke in public; and in many cases scarce left trembling even in the height and vehemence of his eloquence."* Plutarch, however, admits that the trembling of the orator on this occasion, was ascribed rather to his anxiety for his friend, than to any particular timidity. For ourselves, we see in Cicero's apprehensions, and determination to act in spite of them, the best evidence of true courage and loyal friendship, and can feel no surprise at his agitation; as he was not only active in opposition to Pompey, whose wish, with him, was in most cases, sovereign; but may be supposed to have felt that in defending the murderer of Clodius, he was provoking a power now furious, and still formidable, at no time backward in revenge, and once calamitous to himself. But whether his alarm were unworthy of him or not, the speech which has come down to us, corrected, as is said by himself, for Milo when in exile, is a perfect model of a criminal law argument. We know nothing of the kind in modern oratory to be preferred to it, unless we yield to the high wrought eulogy of Burke, and point to the gorgeous effort of Sheridan.

It is a trite observation that human nature is the same in all ages. Supposing that by this is meant that the judgments and passions of men have been at all times swayed equally by like causes, we have somewhere seen it hinted that the great variation in taste at different periods, on literary subjects, and more especially on oratory, gave counte-

* Plutarch.

nance to a contrary opinion; and, to say the truth, though our admiration of Cicero's great power in his art partakes in no small measure of enthusiasm, yet we readily admit that we read of its wonderful effects with surprise, and have been far more intensely affected by the eloquence of Chatham, Sheridan, and other British orators, as also of some of our own, from the era of the elder Adams to the present day, than by the justest and most polished translations of the Roman's greatest efforts. This may argue a taste unsound, but singular it assuredly is not. We incline to think, however, that the eloquence of Cicero has been at no time equalled, and build this opinion upon its multiplied and well attested trophies. A history of oratory would not perhaps present better authenticated or more signal triumphs, than were some of those to which, in the sketch of the consulate, we have referred. They appear indeed to have completely justified the rapturous admiration (as Middleton calls it) of Pliny, who tells us that Cicero could persuade the people to give up their bread, their pleasures, and their injuries, to the charms of his eloquence.*

There was at this time another striking proof of subserviency to power. Pompey, affecting a laudable concern for the electoral right, proposed a law and succeeded in passing it, providing that no consul or prætor should thereafter be qualified to hold a province, until five years should have elapsed from the close of his magistracy; meanwhile the provinces were to be governed by such senators of consular and prætorian rank as had not been abroad. These foreign commands were much coveted, and being due to those who had enjoyed the higher trusts at home, were supposed to be the great source of impurity in the elections, as the means of accumulation they afforded, and the vast power they conferred, were such, that the most profligate steps were frequently taken to secure the preliminary offices. The patriotic alarm of Pompey was not such, however, as to endanger or disturb his own power or

* Quo, te M. Tulli piaculo taceam? &c.—Hist. vii. xxx.

hopes. He took care that his law should have no retrospective energy, and managed to secure the government of Spain for himself when his consulship should have expired; and to appease any resentment which Cæsar might feel at being overlooked in these extraordinary privileges, so arranged that the absence of that general might not be objected to him in his suit for the consulship, of which he was then again desirous. On this occasion, the senate appears to have exerted all its power to obstruct this latter measure; but Cicero, at the joint request of Pompey and Cæsar, again prevailed to thwart that body, and propitiate its enemies.*

Under the law of Pompey, of consular rank, he was now made governor of Cilicia,† and though at no time desirous of foreign command; esteeming his senatorian functions more suited to his genius, he did not think himself at liberty to withhold his services; but seems to have been governed exclusively by a sense of duty, as the appointment was in truth repugnant to his wishes; nor was he in the least influenced by the certain means of acquisition it promised, or by the prospect of uncontrollable power and regal state within the province. The government was, however, accepted with a view to an immediate return on the expiration of the year, and we find him, even before his departure, urgent in his entreaties to his friends, by all means to prevent the prolongation of his command.

After an interview of some days with Pompey, which seems to have been of a nature to preclude all disclosures, at least by letter, to his friend, but which, from subsequent events, we may suppose to have resulted in a determination to adhere to and promote the fortunes of that general, he left Italy for his government, accompanied by his brother Quintus,‡ and Pontinius, an approved soldier, as lieutenant-

* Ad. Atticum, 7. 1. Duncan's Cic. 592. Note 18.

† A country of Asia Minor.

‡ "Quintus Cicero, the brother of the orator, after having passed through the office of prætor in the year 692, was elected governor of Asia, where he presided three years with credit. He distinguished himself in Gaul as one of Cæsar's lieutenants, but at the breaking out of the civil war he followed the fortune of Pom-

ants. On reaching Iconium in Lycaonia, he repaired to the camp, and put himself in readiness to repel an expected incursion of the Parthians, emboldened by the defeat and death of Crassus, again to invade the Roman territories. It was not however his fortune to come into conflict with that formidable enemy, much to the satisfaction of his friends, whose confidence in his generalship was not unlimited, and who we rather suspect, were any thing but assured of his valor. It must be conceded, nevertheless, that whilst his civil administration was eminently wise and beneficial, he was at all times prompt in his duty as a soldier. Having it principally in charge to bring Cappadocia to submit to king Ariobarzanes, he was in this successful, to the satisfaction of all parties, without recourse to arms, though there was need of warlike operation against the bands of robbers infesting Mount Amanus, the eastern boundary of his province; and these he completely routed. This last affair was deemed of such moment that the army saluted him imperator,* a title formerly of much value, but then from indiscriminate use somewhat shorn of its dignity. The governor himself seems to have been not a little proud of his prowess, and to have meditated not only a supplication, but the honors of a triumph for this and other exploits not more shining when abroad; and was so sanguine as to have reserved money for the purpose. We are told that Cœlius, the orator, having desired him to send him some panthers from Cilicia for his games, "in his answer he could not forbear boasting of his achievements.

pey. However, after the battle of Pharsalia, he made his peace with Cæsar and returned into Italy. He appears to have been of a haughty, petulant, and imperious temper, and in every view of his character altogether unamiable. But what gives it a cast of peculiar darkness is his conduct towards Cicero, whom he endeavored to prejudice in the opinion of Cæsar at a time when they were both suppliants for his clemency. This, as far as can be collected from the letters to Atticus, was an instance of the basest and most aggravated ingratitude. For whatever Cicero's failings may have been in other respects, he seems to have had none with regard to Quintus, but that of loving him with a tenderness he ill deserved."—*Melmoth, Ad. Att. l. xv. 6. xviii.*

* Imperator, in Roman antiquity, was a title of honor conferred on victorious generals by their armies, and afterwards confirmed by the senate,

He said there were no panthers left in Cilicia; these animals in their vexation to find that they were the only objects of war, while every thing else was at peace, were fled into Caria.”* It is thought, nevertheless, by the moderns, that the author we quote speaks too slightly of these military services, as it is certain that Cicero received the public thanks and that the people went near to decree him a triumph. Be this as it may, it was from his civil government that he derived substantial glory: and perhaps the Roman annals do not furnish an example of a proconsular administration, in many ways so admirable. Careless of acquisition himself, and constant in his desire to promote the happiness of those he governed, he was inflexible in protecting them from the rapine of all about him; and recovering large sums of money, shamefully embezzled, he wisely and kindly applied them to their wants. In short his whole rule is worthy of the highest praise; it was vigorous, moderate, just and clement.

* Plutarch is wrong in the name of Cicero's correspondent; he has it Cæcilius, it was as we have given it, Cœlius.

SECTION IV.

IN that master-stroke of policy, the formation of the first triumvirate, of which Julius Cæsar was the crafty projector, is seen an early and most effective step, in his long contemplated march to absolute dominion. Full of deserved laurels on his return from Spain, and affecting to be animated only by a feeling of humanity, and by a desire for the public concord, a declared motive in which the statesmen of the day were generally misled, he applied himself to heal the existing quarrels of Pompey with Crassus; nor was he long in effecting his design; these late enemies appreciating his rising power, and dazzled by the wily project presented to them.* A triple alliance was proposed; and though each had his individual views of aggrandizement, the deepest injury, if not total ruin, of the authority of the senate, was a common object of the league. That effected, each, no doubt, when combining, resolved to follow his separate design. How far this primary object was realized we have already seen, as also to what extent the fears or gratitude of Cicero had contributed to its accomplishment. In this union, at all events, did the Roman constitution receive its deadliest blow.

The secret of the subsequent rupture between Pompey and Cæsar, may be found in their mutual determination, the object of their league effected, to bear no brother near the throne. The vast renown which Cæsar had acquired

* Plutarch, if we mistake not, confines a true knowledge of Cæsar's real intention to Cato; but the inference is inevitable that Cicero was as little deceived, else why dissuade, as he is known to have done, an union with purposes avowedly so laudable. We are indeed not left to inference in this matter, having the orator's own authority.—*Phil.* 2. x.

by his extraordinary valor and military talents in the late wars of Gaul, added to his great reputation before, had made him the equal of his rival. His soaring spirit, however, panted for supremacy; and every cement of their union now destroyed by the death of Julia and the fate of Crassus, the civil war began, and with it vanished the republican glories of Rome.

There was little hope of reconciliation, when Cicero, his government of Cilicia having expired, arrived in Italy. He discovered that the desire of war was universal; and though in an interview with Pompey he found him resolved upon a struggle, seeing in its result the slavery of his country, he did not the less exert his zeal and influence, to mediate a peace. It was the more difficult to manage Pompey, as he seems at that time to have held his enemy in contempt, and to have reposed a fearless confidence in his own troops, and in those of the republic; whilst Cæsar feigning a reluctance to war, assured of the superiority and affection of his army, was in fact opposed to all accommodation. The truth is, the hour had arrived long foreseen by both, and no doubt welcomed, when hatred and ambition were at once to be appeased by the ruin of a rival and undivided empire.* Pompey inflexible, Cicero appears to have found his only comfort in a vain imagination, that Cæsar would not hazard the mighty power he had reached; but mistaken here, he did not hesitate to advise the friends of peace to grant him his own terms rather "than try the experiment of arms, and *prefer the most unjust conditions to the justest war*: since after they had been arming him against themselves for ten years past, it was too late to think of fighting when they had made him too strong for them."†

One would think that in contemplating this now irresisti-

* There are some who think that Cæsar's desire of peace at this time was sincere. That it was so, is inferable from his own commentaries, and perhaps from some of the letters of Cicero. We incline, notwithstanding, to Plutarch's view, "that his motive was the same that animated Cyrus and Alexander before him to disturb the peace of mankind; the unquenchable thirst of empire, and the wild ambition of being the greatest man in the world, which was not possible till Pompey was destroyed."

† Ad. Atticum, vii. 5. 6. 14.

ble power, he must have deeply deplored his own potent agency in feeding it, and have felt to what a sad extent his fear, or the mother of the virtues,* had betrayed him. His advice, which we would suppose to have been distasteful to his friend, did not, as is known, prevail. The senate generally, in the interests of Pompey, decreed that Cæsar should dismiss his troops by a certain day, or be declared an enemy; and when opposed by the veto power of the tribunes, one of which was Marc Antony, afterwards so famous, ordered the consuls, prætors, tribunes, and all who were about the city with proconsular power, to take care that the republick received no detriment. Whereupon Antony fled, and the Rubicon was passed.†

* Of gratitude he speaks thus : *Est enim hæc una virtus non solum maxima, sed etiam omnium virtutum mater.*—*Pro. Plane.* 33.—*De. Fin.* 2. 22.

† Under the Roman constitution the tribunes were clothed with very great powers. Among others, a single tribune was able by the interposition of his veto, completely to enbarrass the action of the senate, howsoever important the matter before it, or however alarming the exigency; and the only remedy, rarely ineffectual it is true, was to declare the refractory tribune a public enemy. A similar power was recognized in the government of Poland, and it would seem from the following anecdote of Sir Walter Scott, that the modern cure was somewhat more summary. "Most readers must be so far acquainted with Polish diets as to know, that their resolution was not legally valid if there was one dissenting voice, and that in many cases the most violent means were resorted to, to obtain unanimity. The following instance was related to our informer, a person of high rank. On some occasion a provincial diet was convened for the purpose of passing a resolution, which was generally acceptable; but to which it was apprehended that one noble of the district would oppose his veto. To escape this interruption, it was generally resolved to meet exactly at the hour of summons, to proceed to business upon the instant, and thus to elude the anticipated attempt of the individual to defeat the purpose of the meeting. They accordingly met at the hour with most accurate precision, and shut and bolted the doors. But the dissentient arrived a few moments after, and entrance being refused, because the diet was already constituted, he climbed upon the roof of the hall, and it being summer time when no fires were lighted, descended through the vent into the stove, by which in winter the apartment was heated. Here he lay perdu, until the vote was called, when just as it was about to be recorded as unanimous in favor of the above measure, he thrust his head out of the stove, like a turtle protruding his neck from his shell, and pronounced the fatal *veto*. Unfortunately for himself, instead of instantly withdrawing his head, he looked round for an instant with exultation, to remark and enjoy the confusion which his sudden appearance and interruption had excited in the assembly. One of the nobles who stood by unsheathed his sabre, and severed at a blow the head of the dissentient from his body." Our noble informer expressing some doubt of a story so extraordinary, was referred for its confirmation to prince Sobeisky, afterwards king of Poland, who not only bore testimony to the strange scene as what he had himself witnessed, but declared that the head of the dietin rolled over on his own foot, almost as soon as he heard the word veto uttered.

It may be well for a clear understanding of Cicero's after relations with the tribune we have named, to hint at the nature and circumstances of their earlier acquaintance. The family of Antony was noble, and several of his ancestors had enjoyed the highest dignities in Rome. He was himself ambitious, and oppressed by no scruples as to the means of his advancement, was the willing and active friend of Cæsar and his designs. His personal hatred of Cicero grew out of an influence the latter had exerted in separating him from his friend Curio, who was devotedly attached to him, and supplied him with means for his debaucheries. Cicero advised the elder Curio, who had asked his counsel in the matter, to pay his son's debts, annexing as a condition, the dismissal of his friend.* The enmity thus originated, was embittered by Antony's connexions, who by the marriage of his mother with Lentulus, put to death in the late conspiracy, were the inveterate enemies of Cicero. At the commencement of the civil war, however, Antony professed the warmest regard for him, and had before even attacked his old enemy Clodius,† in return for assistance afforded, in his suit for the quæstorship, which had been extended to him at the pressing solicitation of Cæsar.

The contemptuous opinion of Cæsar's power which, in his conferences with Cicero, Pompey had indulged, would appear from his retreat at this time, to have been either not real, or to have undergone a sudden and entire change. It was the general belief, that the plan of the war would be to act on the defensive, until the legions from Spain could arrive; and all were astonished when Pompey determined to abandon Italy, and none more so than Cicero. He had not as yet declared for him, and not having accompanied

* "Curio when a very young man had entered into a commerce of a criminal and most detestable kind with Antony. His father in order to break off this intercourse, was obliged to call in Cicero; who by his prudent and friendly advice, weaned the son from a passion not less expensive it seems, than it was execrable; and by this means as Cicero reproaches Antony in one of his philippics, he saved an illustrious family from utter ruin"—*Melm. Plut. in. Ant.*

† In the noble and affecting speech for Milo, Cicero speaks in terms of warm commendation of Antony's attack upon Clodius.

him in his flight, many believed that he would join Cæsar. Plutarch says that he fluctuated greatly in his opinion, and was in the utmost anxiety. That he was anxious, his letters abundantly show; though there does not appear to be any evidence of intention at any time to join Cæsar, whatever may have been the native irresolution displayed in the delay to follow Pompey. He was scarce more amazed than incensed at the precipitate retreat from Rome; thought that his friend had done nothing prudently, or with courage; and knew that his own advice and authority had been slighted. He did, therefore, meditate a neutral course, which he was aware would satisfy Cæsar. Of this, as will presently appear, he had every assurance.

In a letter to Atticus, after Pompey's withdrawal, Cicero says, "the great obligations which I am under to Pompey, and my particular friendship with him, as well as the cause of the republick, seem to persuade me that I ought to join my counsels and fortunes with his. Besides, if I stay behind, and desert that band of the best and most eminent citizens, I must fall under the power of a single person, who gives me many proofs indeed of being my friend, and whom you know I have long ago taken care to make such, from a suspicion of this very storm which hangs over us; yet it should be well considered both how far I may venture to trust him, and supposing it clear that I may do so, whether it be consistent with a firm and honest citizen to continue in that city, where he has borne the greatest honors and performed the greatest acts, and where he is now invested with the most honorable priesthood, when it is to be attended with some danger, and perhaps with some disgrace, if Pompey should ever restore the republick. These are the difficulties on the one side, let us see what they are on the other. Nothing has hitherto been done by our Pompey either with prudence or courage. I may add also, nothing but what was contrary to my advice and authority." And after alluding to Pompey's pains in nursing the power of Cæsar, he proceeds: "What can be more dishonorable,

or show a greater want of conduct, than his retreat, or rather shameful flight, from the city," &c. &c. And again in another letter: "For my part I easily know whom I ought to fly, not whom I ought to follow. As to that saying of mine, which you extol and think worthy to be celebrated, that I would rather be conquered with Pompey than conquer with Cæsar, it is true I still say so; but with such a Pompey as he then was, or I took him to be; but as to this man who runs away before he knows from whom and whither; who has betrayed us and ours, and given up his country, and is now leaving Italy,—if I had rather be conquered with him, the thing is over, I am conquered." These letters show, that although displeased with and almost despising Pompey, his mind was undetermined; and in another he tells Atticus that he had neither done nor omitted to do any thing which had not a probable excuse, and that he was willing to consider a little longer what was fit and right for him to do.

With regard to his views of the two great parties distracting the empire, it is very manifest that he deemed most poorly of both; though it is equally clear that his preferences were with Pompey. His view of Cæsar is thus eloquently told: "Do you mean Hannibal or the emperor of Rome? Mistaken, wretched man, insensible to every idea of true glory—he pretends that all he does is to maintain his dignity. But can dignity exist without virtue? Is it compatible with virtue to continue at the head of his army, without the voice of the people to authorize him, and to seize cities inhabited by Romans, that he may open himself a more easy passage to the heart of his country? not to mention the cancelling the national debts, the recall of the banished, and a thousand crimes that are yet to be perpetrated, before he can rear the temple of tyrannic power, the only deity he worships. I do not envy his greatness. I would rather spend one day with you in the sunny walks of Lucretum, than be a monarch over innumerable kingdoms acquired by guilt like his. I had rather die a thousand deaths than harbor such an idea, at the expense

of my country. You think, say you, for yourself. And is there a wretch who is not at liberty to think? But I repeat it, I think the man who acts in that manner, is more miserable than the wretch who lies extended on the wheel. There is but one misery beyond it, and that is succeeding in the attempt. But of this enough.”*

The view of Pompey, if possible, is yet more frightful. After stating his idea of a patriot prince, “never,” he exclaims, “did our friend Pompey, and on this occasion less than ever, think upon this character. Both Cæsar and he are rivals in power, but not for making this a flourishing government. Pompey did not abandon Rome because it was untenable, nor Italy because he was driven out of it; but his original design was to move earth and sea, to rouse barbarous monarchs, to introduce the troops of savage nations into Italy, and to levy numerous armies. He wishes to renew the tyranny of Sylla, and in this wish many concur with him. Do you imagine these two rivals can come to no accommodation? that they can enter upon no agreement? They may; but now or never is the time, but neither of them has our happiness ultimately in view, for that is inconsistent with the interests of them both.”†

About this time Cæsar addressed a letter to Cicero, urging him to come to Rome, and direct him by his advice, authority and assistance, in all things. We insert the reply to it, as in striking conflict with his real opinions, and as it provoked the reproaches of many, and even, it would seem, of the time-serving Atticus himself.

“CICERO Imperator to CÆSAR Commander in chief, wisheth prosperity :

“Having read your letter, which I received from our friend Furnius, in which you propose I should return to Rome, I was not surprised at your desire to avail yourself of my advice and authority; but I was at a loss for your

* Ad. Atticum. The reader will probably agree with Guthrie, that Addison, in his *Cato*, was not a little indebted to this eloquent letter.

† Ad. Atticum.

meaning in requiring my interest and assistance. I however flattered myself, that consistently with your admirable and matchless wisdom, you were willing I should co-operate with you for re-establishing the happiness, the peace and the tranquility of our country, for which I am qualified both by my disposition and character. If this be your wish, if you are concerned for our friend Pompey, and for a reconciliation with him, and with the country, you can indeed find no man more proper than I am to be employed in such a cause. I took the most early opportunity of recommending peaceful measures, both to him and the senate, nor have I taken the least concern in the war ever since hostilities commenced; judging you to be injured by a war, which was kindled by those enemies who envied you the honors decreed by the people of Rome: but as on that occasion I not only promoted your pretensions to those distinctions, but likewise solicited others to join your party, so at this time, I am sensibly concerned for the dignity of Pompey. For it is several years since I singled you both out as the objects of my chief regard, and as my most particular friends, which you still are.”*

There can be no question that a stern patriot would and ought to have disdained, in this way, to approach a man, of whose execrable projects he had no doubt; and there is not the shadow of an apology for Cicero, except that he designed his letter to promote the purposes of peace. He admits to Atticus, that he flattered Cæsar, to give the greater weight to his opinion, and that for the same reason he assured him he had the better cause: speaking to serve his country, he adds, that he cared not to be reproached for such servility, and that in such a cause he would have gladly thrown himself at Cæsar’s feet. To say the truth, his apologetical letter on this occasion, does not betray the conscious shame which often waited upon his compliances: for he declares that he was perfectly willing to have it proclaimed in an assembly of the people; though it is not easy to discover in what way his good name could be served by

* Ad. Att. 9. 6. 11.

an exposure of his flatteries, or of sentiments which all must have known to be in direct hostility to the truth.

If in the letter to Cæsar, and apology to Atticus, Cicero were sincere, he thought an accommodation not impossible, and might hence have delayed his flight to the party to which he was at heart attached. The interview, however, mentioned in the following letter, must have weakened, if not altogether dispelled, such a hope; and was well calculated to precipitate his retreat. "My discourse with him [Cæsar] was such, as would rather make him think well of me, than thank me. I stood firm in refusing to go to Rome; but was deceived in expecting to find him easy: for I never saw any one less so: 'he was condemned,' he said, 'by my judgment, and if I did not come, others would be the more backward.' I told him that their case was very different from mine. After many things said, however, on both sides, he bade me come and try to make peace. Shall I do it, says I, in my own way? 'Do you imagine,' replied he, 'that I will prescribe to you?' I will move the senate, then, said I, for a decree against your going to Spain, or transporting your troops into Greece, and say a great deal besides in bemoaning the case of Pompey. 'I will not allow,' said he, 'such things to be said.' So I thought, said I, and for that reason will not come at all. The result was, that to shift off the discourse, he wished me to consider of it, which I could not refuse to do, and so we parted. I am persuaded that he is not pleased with me; but I am pleased with myself, which I have not been before, for a long time. As for the rest, good gods! what a crew he has with him, what a hellish band as you well call them; and his declaration which I had almost forgotten, was odious; that if he was not permitted to use my advice, he would use such as he could get from others, and pursue all measures which were for his service.'"

This interview with Cæsar had the effect, we have supposed, of prompting him to speed in resolving, though he

did not actually depart for some time after. It is a conjecture of some, that Cæsar did not think him of so great importance as he imagined; else he would not have left him at liberty. We are disposed to think otherwise; and it is certain, that notwithstanding the conference which dissatisfied him, he besought Cicero not to run after a cause which was then tottering, after declining to do so when it stood firm. "My successes, and the defeats of my adversaries," he writes, "have been so great, that you will both sensibly violate my friendship, and hurt your own interest, if you do not follow fortune;" and concludes, "what is more suitable to the character of a worthy, peaceable man and good citizen, than to take no concern in civil dissensions. This is a conduct which some approved of, but could not follow, because of danger; but you, after a full testimony of my life, and trial of my friendship, will find no course more safe or honorable, than to decline having a hand in this dispute."

In addition, Cicero was informed by a friend in the councils of Cæsar, that the clemency of that general, in his first successes, was the result of policy, and not of humanity, and that on a prosperous issue of the war, his revenge would be ample. He conjured him, therefore, to remain neutral; as also did Tullia, to await events in Spain. His mind, however, at last resolved, he fled to Pompey; a determination such as friendship, and abhorrence of a bad, though powerful cause, should have dictated; and the more to be commended, as adopted at a moment when the fortunes of his friend were declining, and when pressed himself by Cæsar, and the importunate prayers of others, to neutrality.

There are some, nevertheless, who deny to Cicero the merit we concede; and incline to a belief, from the whole tenor of his letters, that he would never have fled to Pompey but from a conviction that he could not offend the generous Cæsar beyond the measure of his clemency. In the speech for Marcellus, he has himself declared, that gratitude was

the sole cause of his decision;* but it is not probable that on that occasion he would have disclosed his real view of Cæsar, or its effect upon his conduct at this time, and we are willing to think that the mixed and more flattering motive we have ascribed was the true one.

It was clearly foreseen, that in the result of the approaching struggle, Rome must either yield to a despotic domination of Cæsar, or to a scarce less unmitigated rule of Pompey; and there was little or no hope for the republic. The declared opinion of Cicero was, that "which side soever prevailed, the war must necessarily end in a tyranny; the only difference was, that if their enemies conquered, they would be proscribed, if their friends be slaves."† The followers of Pompey were generally impressed with a belief of the importance of Cicero's character and counsels, to their cause; and may be supposed to have been not a little elated at his determination. On the other hand, we have seen with what anxious and condescending efforts Cæsar had essayed to secure his neutrality at least, if not his active friendship. We may hence infer his vast real or supposed influence in the empire; and in that view, his adherence to Pompey must have been of consequence: otherwise, it would seem to have been fruitless, and not merely so, but accompanied with a demeanour, without dignity, and even vexatious.

On reaching the army his universal complaints are undisguised, and we find him writing to his friend, that there was nothing good among them but the cause. Still the advocate of peace, he displeases his general, by an expression of dislike to his councils, and unreserved opinion of the hazard of the war. Forbidden to talk of peace, his advice was equally unavailing in the plan and conduct of the war.‡

* *Hominem secutus sum privato officio, non publico: tantumque apud me grati animi fidelis memoria valuit.*—*Pro Marcell.* v.

† *Ad. Att.* 7. 7.

‡ "I had no sooner arrived, than I had occasion to repent of my resolution: not so much from the danger to which I was myself exposed, as from the many capital faults I discovered among them. In the first place, Pompey's forces were neither very considerable in point of numbers [*his army at Pharsalia was double in number*

This neglect of his opinions, coupled with a rebuke from Cato, upon the folly of his presence at all, begat the repentant feeling he acknowledges, and which he was in no way careful to conceal. "He disparaged," says Plutarch, "Pompey's preparations, insinuated a dislike to his counsils, and never spared his jests upon his allies. He was not indeed inclined to laugh himself; on the contrary, he walked about the camp, with a solemn countenance; but he often made others laugh, though they were little disposed to do so." The good sense of Cato's rebuke, we think, is obvious: in the judgment of that Roman, Cicero could have been more serviceable to his country and friends, had he remained at home and accommodated himself to events. It is not easy, however, to withhold respect from his motive in joining Pompey; and we have already been warm in its approval; but there is cause of blame, scarcely to be pardoned, in his unmanly dejection, and still more

to that of Cæsar] nor by any means composed of warlike troops; and in the next place, (I speak, however, with exception of Pompey, and a few others of the principal leaders,) they carried on the war with such a spirit of rapaciousness, and breathed such principles of cruelty in their conversation, that I could not think even upon our success, without horror. 'To this I must add, that some of the most considerable officers were deeply involved in debt: and in short, there was nothing good among them but the cause. Thus despairing of success, I advised (what indeed I had always recommended,) that proposals of accommodation should be offered to Cæsar; and when I found Pompey utterly averse to all measures of that kind, I endeavored to persuade him at least to avoid a general engagement. This last advice, he seemed sometimes inclined to follow, and probably would have followed, if a slight advantage, which he soon afterwards gained, had not given him a confidence in his troops. [*Cæsar thought this advantage a great one, if properly followed.*—Plut. in Pom.] From that moment, all the skill and conduct of this great man seemed to have utterly forsaken him; and he acted so little like a general, that with a raw and inexperienced army, he imprudently gave battle to the most brave and martial legions. The consequence was, that he suffered a most shameful defeat; and abandoning his camp to Cæsar, he was obliged to run away, unaccompanied even by a single attendant. This event determined me to lay down my arms, being persuaded that if we could not prevail with our united forces, we should scarce have better success when they were broken and dispersed. I declined, therefore, to engage any further in a war, the result of which must necessarily be attended with one or other of the following unhappy consequences: either to perish in the field of battle, to be taken prisoner by the conquerors, to be sacrificed by treachery, to have recourse to Juba, to live in a sort of voluntary exile, or to fall by one's own hand: other choice most certainly there was none, if you would not trust to the clemency of the victor. Banishment, it must be owned, to a mind that had nothing to reproach itself with, would have been the most eligible of all those evils: especially under the reflection of being driven from a commonwealth, which presents nothing to our view, but what we must behold with pain.—*Ad. Marcum Marium.*

unworthy railery when in the camp. Enlisted in the highest quarrel the world had ever seen, and bound by interest and friendship to Pompey and his cause, he should have been the last to have wounded either by his ridicule, or to have shown a littleness of pique at slighted counsels.

Detained by ill health at Dyrrachium, he was not in the disastrous battle of Pharsalia; but resolved at once, on intelligence of its issue, to make it to himself the end of the war.* Cato had still under him a considerable force, and offered to Cicero, as superior in dignity, the command of it. This he refused: alleging it to be folly to resist a power when broken, for which they were no match when entire. His refusal so exasperated a son of Pompey, that had not Cato interposed, he must have been killed. Declining to follow this devoted Roman into Africa, he abandoned the cause; submitted to the mercy of the conqueror; and, applying all his zeal and address to win a share of his truly remarkable clemency, tarried at Brundisium until assured of his success.

There is, perhaps, no part of the life of this extraordinary man, more justly subject to reproach, than that of which we now treat. The cause of his country abandoned at the very first disaster of its army, his means of conciliating Cæsar, whom at heart he detested, and whom we have seen him denouncing as the most profligate of mankind, are cringing and despicable; and he does not leave us a doubt that he did in truth desire the triumph of the cause which had ever been his aversion.† His despondency was quite as great, and every way as ridiculous, as when in exile; and it was not surprising if his agony were far more exquisite; for, when driven from his home by the machinations of a villain, there was to be found in conscious inno-

* It is certain from a letter to Cassius, that Cicero and he had agreed that with them the war should close with a single battle. Whence we may judge of the value of their adherence. Cicero was afterwards, with great justice, charged with his unworthy conduct in the camp; nor is his defence in the 2d Philippic in any view of it satisfactory.—*Phil.* 2. xvi.

† *Mihi cum omnia sunt intolerabilia ad dolorem tum maxime, quod in eam causam venisse me video, ut ea sola utilia mihi esse videantur quæ semper nolui.*—*Ad. Att.* xi. xiii.

cence, had his philosophy been equal to it, all that should console; but now, distracted by doubts of the victor's clemency, and shocked by domestic perfidy, his anguish knew no bounds, and was aggravated by a consciousness, he scarcely attempts to disguise, of shameful want of fidelity to Rome.

"How heavy," he writes, "are the strokes of my affliction? In vain do you endeavor to weaken their force, and yet your very endeavors are so earnest, that they abate my sorrow. Repeat your salutary correspondence as often as possible. Continue, above all things, to support me in the hope that I have not lost the esteem of the worthy; and yet how can you succeed? It is impracticable. But if any occasion should put it into your power (as I know none at present) to justify me with such men, that would give me comfort indeed. But this justification must arise from the events that have happened. It has been said, for instance, that I ought to have left Italy at the same time with Pompey. Now his death takes off, in some measure, the reproach of my having been wanting in my duty in that respect. But of all the charges against me, none affects me more, than my not going to Africa. Now I reasoned in this manner. *I did not think the cause of our country ought to be left to the defence of barbarous auxiliaries, and the most treacherous of all the people in the world, especially as they were to act against an army which had gained repeated victories.* This apology will perhaps not satisfy the people: for I hear that a great many worthy Romans have gone to Africa, and I know that some were there before. Here I feel most vulnerable, and here too I must appeal to events. It may be said that some, possibly all, those patriots would have made their peace with Cæsar, if they could. But if they should hold out and prevail, in what a light shall I then appear? But, say you, what will become of them should they be conquered? Why they fall with glory. That indeed is the reflection which torments me."*

Whilst at Brundisium, Cicero's feelings received a wound which we do not at all doubt was a principal and powerful cause of his inordinate sorrow. Indeed he speaks of it as the greatest shock he had at any time sustained. Admirable in most of his domestic relations, and at all times devoted to his brother, he learned with dismay, that Quintus, unmindful of his affection and constant care for him, had fled from the field of Pharsalia to Cæsar, and to accelerate his pardon had not scrupled to declare that his abandonment of his interests and connexion with Pompey, was altogether owing to his brother's entreaties. Cicero was the more concerned, as, added to the pain he felt at a brother's baseness, it was well calculated to affect him personally with Cæsar, to whom he was now preparing with all possible grace to submit. Undeceived however, in the magnanimity of the conqueror, he was met, not merely with kindness, but distinguished honor.

Careless to conceal his determination to comply with the times, and to think with as little regret as possible of his past influence in the senate, and authority with the people, he was now only anxious to live in safety and repose; and sought them, as we think, somewhat too contentedly under a despotism he abhorred. If his own assurances may be credited, he hated the boundless power of his master; and we know from himself, that so far were the Pompeian chiefs from despair, their force, and that soon after their disaster in Thessaly, through the alliance of friends in Africa and succor from Spain, was greater than that of Cæsar, and that they were in so high spirits as to talk of coming into Italy before their enemy could return from Alexandria. We have no doubt, nor had he, that it was Cicero's duty, rather than live quietly a slave, to have joined so powerful an army fighting for the republic; and though he may have professed to rely on the old apology, that nothing was to be hoped for from either, we can regard no cause sustained by Cato unworthy of him, and can imagine nothing more shallow than his assigned reason for his absence, "that the republic ought not to be defended by barbarous and treache-

rous auxiliaries.”* A devoted patriot is no such epicure in his means: he clings to his country in the midst of her saddest disasters; indeed devotion is tested by calamity. Such a patriot was Cato; but the hatred of tyranny and scorn of a master, by which the far loftier soul of that Roman was animated, were strangers in the breast of Tully. It is to be sure, a lesson of philosophy to submit with patience to hopeless evil; but we apprehend that he was hasty in his application of the rule; in other words, we believe that his despair, if felt at all, or if ever allowable in a statesman, was premature, and precipitated by fear and desire of repose.†

About this time Cicero divorced Terentia, and married Publilia, a very young lady who was his ward, and of large fortune. Terentia denied all his charges, and his marriage with a younger woman was thought a very good apology for her.‡ Tiro§ affirmed that he took Publilia for her wealth, that it might enable him to pay his debts, and this is inferrible from his own letter to Atticus, in reply to a congratulatory one from that friend. Be this as it may, she soon met the fate of her predecessor; being divorced for her supposed pleasure at the death of his darling daughter Tulliola. This child appears to have been his idol, and so pregnant was his sorrow at her loss, that, as Plutarch has it, philosophers from all parts came to comfort him.||

* *Judicio hoc sum usus, non esse barbaris auxiliis, fallacissimæ gentes remp defendendam.—Ad. Att. xi. vi.*

† “We are never authorized to abandon our country to its fate, or to act or advise as if it had no resource. There is no reason to apprehend, because ordinary means threaten to fail, that no others can spring up. Whilst our heart is whole it will find means to make them. The heart of the citizen is a perennial spring of energy to the state. Because the pulse seems to intermit, we must not presume that it will cease instantly to beat. *The public must never be regarded as incurable.*”

BURKE.

‡ Plutarch.

§ A favorite freedman of Cicero, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

|| There is the following note in Middleton.

“Coelius Rhodiginus tells us that in the time of Sextus 4th, there was found near Rome, in the Appian way over against the tomb of Cicero, the body of a woman, whose hair was dressed up in a net work of gold, and which from the inscription was thought to be the body of Tullia. It was entire, and so well preserved by spices as to have suffered no injury from time; yet when it was removed into the city it mouldered away in three days. But this was only the hasty conjecture of

On the death of his daughter, he determined to build a temple, contemplating something in the nature of an apotheosis. It is surprising with what tenacity he clung to this purpose; his letters to Atticus are anxious and unremitted in relation to it; deriving as he did from so extraordinary a whim consolation in his bereavement, and looking upon its fulfilment as he would upon that of a solemn religious vow. It was, however, ultimately abandoned; but not before it had given rise to a charge of incest, made at the time, and much propagated, though probably not believed in the Augustan age.

The orator tells us nothing of the philosophers to whom Plutarch refers; but appears to have found the greatest relief in solitude, where we find him discountenancing, and indeed flying from a proposed visit of his young and beautiful bride, though he is at that time silent as to her supposed pleasure at the death of his daughter.

We introduce the following letter of Sulpicius, the greatest lawyer of his day, as it will enable the reader to judge of the very estimable character of one most dear to Cicero, and as it is thought to be a masterpiece in its kind; and accompany it with another upon a like subject, written by an extraordinary character of the last age, which we think may favorably compare with it. It is true the latter writer could point to one high source of consolation to which Sulpicius was a stranger.

. SERVIUS SULPICIUS to M. T. CICERO.

“I was exceedingly concerned, as indeed I ought to be, to hear of the death of your daughter Tullia, which I looked upon as an affliction common to us both. If I had been with you I should have made it my business to convince you what a real share I take in your grief. Though that kind of consolation is but wretched and lamentable, as it

some learned of that time, which for want of authority to support it, soon vanished of itself; for no inscription was ever produced to confirm it, nor has it been mentioned that I know of by any other author that there was any sepulchre of Cicero in the Appian way.”—*Vide Coel. Rhod. Lection. Antiq.* 3. cap. 24.

is to be performed by friends and relations, who are overwhelmed with grief, and cannot enter upon their task without tears, and seem rather to want comfort themselves than to be in a condition to administer it to others. I resolved, therefore, to write to you what occurred upon it to my mind; not that I imagine the same things would not occur to you also, but that the force of your grief might possibly hinder your attention to them. What reason is there then to disturb yourself so immoderately on this melancholy occasion? Consider how fortune has already treated us, how it has deprived us of what ought to be as dear as children: our country, credit, dignity, honors. After so miserable a cross as this, what addition can it make to our grief to suffer one misfortune more? or how can a mind, after being exercised in such trials not grow callous, and think every thing else of inferior value? but is it for your daughter's sake that you grieve? yet how often must you necessarily reflect, as I myself very frequently do, that those cannot be said to be hardly dealt with whose lot it has been in these times, without suffering any affliction, to exchange life for death. For what is there in our present circumstances that would give her any great invitation to live? what business? what hopes? what prospect of comfort before her? Was it to pass her days in the married state with some young man of the first quality? for you I know on account of your dignity might have chosen what son-in-law you pleased, out of all our youth, to whose fidelity you might have entrusted her. Was it then for the sake of bearing children whom she might have had the pleasure to see flourishing afterwards in the enjoyment of their paternal fortunes, and rising gradually to all the honors of the state, and using the liberty to which they were born in the protection of their friends and clients? But what is there of all this which was not taken away before it was even given to her? But it is an evil you will say to lose our children. It is so: yet it is a much greater to suffer what we now endure. I cannot help mentioning one thing which has given me no small comfort, and may help also perhaps to mitigate your grief. On my

return from Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect around me. Ægina was behind, Megara before me: Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left: all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now lay overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight I could not but think presently within myself: alas, how we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short; when the carcasses of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view. Why wilt thou not then command thyself Servius, and remember that thou art born a man. Believe me, I was not a little comforted by this contemplation; try the force of it therefore if you please, upon yourself, and imagine the same prospect before your own eyes. But to come nearer home, when you consider how many of our greatest men have perished lately at once; what destruction has been made in the empire; what havoc in all the provinces; how can you be so shocked to be deprived of the fleeting breath of one little woman; who, if she had not died at this time, must necessarily have died a few years hence, since that was the condition of her being born. But recall your mind from a reflection of this kind to the consideration of yourself; and think rather on what becomes your character and dignity; that your daughter lived as long as life was worth enjoying; as long as the republic stood; had seen her father prætor, consul, augur; been married to the noblest of our youth; had tasted every good in life, and when the republic fell then quitted it. What ground is there then either for you or her to complain of fortune on this account? In short do not forget that you are Cicero, one who has been always used to prescribe and give advice to others; nor imitate those paltry physicians who pretend to cure other people's diseases, yet are not able to cure their own; but suggest rather to yourself the same lesson which you would give in the same case. There is no grief so great which length of time will not alleviate; but it would be shameful in you to wait for that time and not to prevent it by your wisdom;

besides, if there be any sense in the dead, such was her love and piety to you, that she must be concerned to see how much you afflict yourself. Give this, therefore, to the deceased, give it to your friends; give it to your country; that it may have the benefit of your assistance and advice whenever there shall be occasion. Lastly, since fortune has now made it necessary to us to accommodate ourselves to our present situation, do not give any one a handle to think that you are not so much bewailing your daughter, as the state of the times, and the victory of certain persons. I am ashamed to write any more lest I should seem to distrust your prudence, and will add, therefore, one thing further and conclude. We have sometimes seen you bear prosperity nobly, with great honor and applause: let us now see that you can bear adversity with the same moderation, and without thinking it a greater burden than you ought to do, lest in the number of all your other virtues this one at last be thought wanting. As to myself, when I understand that your mind has grown calm and composed, I will send you word how all things go on here, and what is the state of the province. Adieu.

DEAN SWIFT to the LORD TREASURER OXFORD, on the death
of his daughter the MARCHIONESS OF CAERMARTHEN.

“My Lord:

“Your lordship is the only person in the world to whom every body ought to be silent upon such an occasion as this, which is only to be supported by the greatest wisdom and strength of mind; wherein, God knows, the best and the wisest of us, who would presume to offer their thoughts, are far your inferiors. It is true, indeed, that a great misfortune is apt to weaken the mind and disturb the understanding. This, indeed, might be some pretence to us to administer our consolations, if we had been wholly strangers to the person gone. But, my lord, who ever had the honor to know her, wants a comforter as much as your lordship; because, though their loss is not so great, yet they have not the same firmness or prudence to support the want

of a friend, a patroness, a benefactor, as you have to support that of a daughter. My lord, both religion and reason forbid me to have the least concern for that lady's death upon her own account, and he must be an ill christian or a perfect stranger to her virtues, who would not wish himself, with all submission to God Almighty's will, in her condition. But your lordship, who has lost such a daughter, and we who have lost such a friend, and the world, which has lost such an example—have in our several degrees much greater cause to lament, than perhaps was ever given by any private person before. For, my lord, I have set down to think of every private quality that could enter into the composition of a lady, and could not single out one, which she did not possess in as high a perfection, as human nature is capable of. But as to your lordship's own particular, as it is an inconceivable misfortune, to have lost such a daughter, so it is a possession which few can boast of to have had such a daughter. I have often said to your lordship, that I never knew any one, by many degrees, so happy in their domestic as you; and I affirm, you are so still; though not by so many degrees—from whence it is very obvious, that your lordship should reflect upon what you have left, and not upon what you have lost. To say the truth, my lord, you began to be too happy for a mortal; much more happy than is usual with the dispensations of Providence, long to continue: you had been the great instrument of preserving your country from foreign and domestic ruin: you have had the felicity of establishing your family in the greatest lustre without any obligation to the bounty of your prince, or any industry of your own: you have triumphed over the violence and treachery of your enemies, by your courage and abilities, and by your steadiness of temper over the inconstancy and caprice of your friends. Perhaps your lordship has felt too much complacency within yourself upon this universal success: and God Almighty, who would not disappoint your endeavors for the public, thought fit to punish you with a domestic loss, where he knew your heart was most exposed; and at the same time has fulfilled his own

wise purposes, by rewarding in a better life that excellent creature he has taken from you. I know not, my lord, why I write this to you, nor hardly what I am writing. I am sure it is not in any compliance with form, it is not from thinking that I can give your lordship ease. I think it was an impulse upon me that I should say something; and whether I shall send you what I have written, I am yet in doubt."

We have said that Cicero hated the boundless power of his master: it is certain, nevertheless, that he was to the last degree cautious in avoiding all offence, and prodigal of praise; "seldom going to Rome, and then only to pay his court to Cæsar; always one of the first to vote him additional honors, and forward to say something new of him and his actions;"* and one would certainly infer from the speeches for Marcellus, Ligarius, and Deiotarus, to which we shall presently refer, though the first of them reveals a desire for the restoration of the republick, that instead of a curse, Rome found a beneficent ruler in her sovereign. Moreover, though Cicero tells us, that no mother ever more bewailed her only son, than he his country;† yet he appears to have passed his leisure agreeably enough, with the bosom friends of the usurper; and there is no want of charity in supposing, that his sorrow had its origin, as much, if not more, in the loss of his own loved authority, than in the overthrow of the republick.

Though generally absent from the public councils, our orator, under the dictatorship, frequently, and sometimes successfully, displayed his eloquence in behalf of friends; and Cæsar, in the height of his power, notwithstanding his anger and predetermination to condemn, is said, in the case of Ligarius, to have been strangely and completely subdued by it. Ligarius was charged with having obstinately prosecuted the war in Africa, an offence, of all others, hateful to Cæsar, who besides regarded him as in other respects

* Plutarch.

† *Patriam eluxi jam gravius et diutius quam ulla mater unicum filium.*

Ep. Fam. ix. xx.

unworthy, and resolved that he should not escape punishment; but with no fears that the charms of eloquence could disturb his purpose, he would not forego the pleasure of listening to an argument which he was so well fitted to enjoy. Plutarch, however, informs us that "he was greatly moved when Cicero began, and that the speech, as it proceeded, had such a variety of pathos, so irresistible a charm, that his color often changed, and it was evident that his mind was torn by conflicting passions; at last where the orator touched on the battle of Pharsalia, he was so extremely affected that his whole frame trembled, the papers fell from his hand, and conquered by the force of eloquence, he acquitted Ligarius." A doubt of this story has been, and we think well, suggested. Valerius Maximus, the chronicler of such incidents, and Quintilian, at all times prone to laud his favorite, are silent; and the advocate himself, in allusion to this effort, speaks of it with a modesty for which he was any thing but remarkable.* Besides, the speech, which is preserved, perhaps in itself furnishes no weak refutation.

In the case of the king Deiotarus, charged with a design to murder Cæsar, when entertained at his palace, Cicero's speech, though artful and eloquent, did not prevail. Cæsar, who seems to have been immoveably prejudiced against this king, who had joined with Pompey, would only consent to a postponement of the cause until in person he could further inquire into the facts, which he proposed to do on his way to Parthia. This proved, in effect, an acquittal; and we afterwards find Deiotarus restored to his throne and dominions, by an act of Antony, at the instance, as Cicero complains, of Fulvia; not that he deemed the monarch unworthy of his crown, but that a bribed and profligate woman should bestow it. Fulvia, however, took no benefit from this arrangement, as on intelligence of Cæsar's death, the old king repossessed himself of his kingdom, and disavowed the acts of his agents, who had promised largely in his name.†

* Ad. Atticum. x. iii.

† Midd. 3, 50. Ad. Att. 14. 12.

The famous speech for Marcellus, made to thank Cæsar for the pardon and recall of that friend, was, at a somewhat earlier period, pronounced in the senate, and is so exquisitely beautiful, that one is inclined to withhold the charge to which, with the others we have here named, it is so justly obnoxious, and of which, though reluctantly, we shall have need to speak hereafter. We refer to its boundless praise of a man whom its author hated, and who was the destroyer of his country's liberties.

We may learn from Cicero's works, in what manner he employed himself during his temporary absence from the consular bench. "For being driven," he says, "from the public administration, I knew no way so effectual of doing good, as by instructing the minds and reforming the morals of the youth; which, in the license of those times, wanted every help to restrain and correct them. The calamity of the city made this task necessary to me, since in the confusion of civil arms, I could neither defend it in my own way, nor, when it was impossible for me to be idle, could I find any thing better to employ myself. My citizens, therefore, will pardon, or rather thank me, that when the government was fallen into the power of a single person, I neither wholly hid or afflicted myself unnecessarily; nor acted in such a manner, as to seem angry at the man or times: nor yet flattered or admired the fortune of another, so as to be displeased with my own. For I had learnt from Plato and philosophy, that these turns and revolutions of states are natural: sometimes into the hands of a few, sometimes of the many, sometimes of one; as this was the case of our own republick, so when I was deprived of my formèr post in it, I betook myself to these studies, in order to relieve my mind from the sense of our common miseries, and to serve my country at the same time in the best manner I was able; for my books supplied the place of my votes in the senate and of my speeches to the people, and I took up philosophy as a substitute for my management of the state." And again, in the book of offices: "My whole diversion is to pass away my time and my cares upon writing, and I

overthrow of the government, than I did in many years before, when it was flourishing.*

It was in this retreat, engaged, as we have seen, that he prepared many of his most esteemed productions; and we cannot but lament, that with firmness of purpose, he had not withstood all attempts to wean him from pursuits so useful to mankind and consoling to himself: but on the triumphant return of Cæsar from Spain, whither he had gone against the sons of Pompey, Cicero was again prevailed with to mingle in affairs; and the whole residue of his life was one unbroken scene of danger, perplexity and fruitless toil.

About this time the dictator was his guest. "Well," he writes, "this formidable visit is at last over without my having reason to repent of my guest, who seemed to enjoy every thing he met with. You must know then, that on the evening before, being the 18th, when he came to the house of Philip, it was so crowded with soldiers, to the number of two thousand, that there was scarcely a room empty for Cæsar himself to sup in. This, I own, gave me apprehensions as to my own case next day, but I was delivered from them by Barba Cassius, who appointed me a guard. Thus the soldiers encamped in the field, and my house was kept clear. He passed the 19th at Philip's house till noon, without suffering any person to be admitted to him, being busied, I supposed, in settling accounts with Balbus. From thence, he walked to my house by the shore. After two o'clock, he went into the bath. He then heard the verses upon Mamurra,† without changing his countenance. After this, he was anointed‡ and set down to

* Divin. 2. 2.—De. Fin. 1. 3. De Off. 3. 1.

† These verses were written by Catullus, and are still extant. Mamurra was a Roman knight and general of the artillery to Cæsar, but noted for extravagancy and luxury in living: the verses in question lashed Cæsar as well as Mamurra.—*Guthrie*.

‡ The Romans, at this time, anointed their guests with essences and perfumes, often lavishly. The magnificence of Otho, in this respect, is spoken of by Plutarch, who relates, that Nero having used a very precious perfume in a feast, and thinking he had carried profusion very far, by shedding it over the head and whole body of Otho, this last in a feast he gave the emperor, next day, by means of pipes of silver and gold, issuing suddenly from different places in the hall, poured out the same perfume like water, and deluged the guests and the floor.—*D'Arnay, Plut. in Galb.*

supper, when he ate heartily and drank freely; for you must know he had taken an emetic, and indeed every thing was well dressed, and the best of the kind.

“But of our pleasures, that was but the last,
For wit and humor seasoned the repast.”

“Besides Cæsar’s table, his retinue was plentifully served in three other dining rooms, and nothing was wanting to the entertainment of his freedmen of the second rank, and his slaves: for his freedmen of the better sort were elegantly treated. In short, I came off like myself, though let me tell you, he is not a guest to whom one would say, ‘pray do me the honor to call as you return.’ No—no, one visit is enough. We talked enough about business, but a great deal about learning. To conclude, he was free, easy and happy. He told me that he would pass one day at Puteoli, and another at Baiæ. Thus I have given you an account of my entertainment, or rather of the manner of my entertainment of this great man, which put me to some inconvenience, but to no trouble.”

Before we come to the great conspiracy of Brutus, we are tempted to transcribe the following passage from the “*Melanges Philosophiques*” of M. Ophellot. The estimate of Cæsar, it presents, though unsustained, as we think, by the facts, is nevertheless highly graphic, and will enable the reader to see the light in which a perhaps sound philosophy has viewed a character endowed beyond doubt, with many of the noblest qualities. M. Ophellot is, however, wrong in asserting that Brutus was the son of Cæsar. That notion is now repudiated, and there was, in truth, a difference of but fifteen years in their ages.

“If after the lapse of eighteen centuries,” observes the writer, “the truth may be published without offence, a philosopher might, in the following terms, censure Cæsar without calumniating him, and applaud him without exciting his blushes. He had one predominant passion: it was the love of glory, and he passed forty years of his life in seeking opportunities to foster and encourage it. His soul entirely absorbed in ambition, did not open itself to other

impulses. He cultivated letters, but he did not love them with enthusiasm, because he had not leisure to become the first orator at Rome. He corrupted the one half of the Roman ladies, but his heart had no concern in the fiery ardor of his senses. In the arms of Cleopatra he thought of Pompey; and this singular man, who disdained to have a partner in the empire of the world, would have blushed to have been for one instant the slave of a woman. We must not imagine that Cæsar was born a warrior, as Sophocles and Milton were born poets. For if nature had made him a citizen of Sybaris, he would have been the most voluptuous of men. If, in our day, he had been born in Pennsylvania, he would have been the most inoffensive of quakers, and would not have disturbed the tranquility of the new world. The moderation with which he conducted himself after his victories has been highly extolled; but in this he showed his penetration, not the goodness of his heart. It was requisite that he should have the appearance of clemency, if he inclined that Rome should forgive him his victories. But what greatness of mind is there in a generosity which follows on a usurpation of supreme power. He had no sooner begun to reflect, than he admired Sylla, hated him, and yet wished to imitate him. At the age of fifteen, he formed the project of being dictator. It was thus that the president Montesquieu conceived, in his early youth, the idea of the 'Spirit of Laws.' Physical qualities, as well as moral causes, contributed to give strength to his character. Nature, which had made him to command, had given him an air of dignity. He had acquired that soft and insinuating eloquence, which is perfectly suited to seduce vulgar minds, and has a powerful influence on the most cultivated. His love of pleasure, was a merit with the fair sex, and women who even in a republick can draw to them the attention and suffrages of men, have the highest importance in desperate times. The ladies of his age were charmed with the prospect of having a dictator whom they might subdue by their attractions. In vain did the genius of Cato watch for some time to sustain the liberty of his

country. It was not equal to contend with that of Cæsar. Of what avail were the eloquence, the philosophy, and the virtue of this republican, when opposed by a man who had the address to debauch the wife of every citizen whose interests he meant to engage, and who, with the haughty temper of a despot, wept at the age of thirty, that he had not conquered the world like Alexander, and who was more desirous to be the first man in a village, than the second in Rome. Cæsar had the good fortune to exist in times of trouble and civil commotions, when the minds of men are put into a ferment; when opportunities of great actions are frequent; when talents are every thing, and when those who can only boast of their virtues, are nothing. If he had lived a hundred years sooner, he would have been no more than an obscure villain, and instead of giving laws to the world, would not have been able to produce any confusion in it. I will here be bold to advance an idea which may appear paradoxical to those who weakly judge men from what they achieve, and not from the principle which leads them to act. Nature formed in the same mould Cæsar, Mohammed, Cromwell and Kouli Khan. They all of them united to genius that profound policy which renders it so powerful. They all of them had an evident superiority over those by whom they were surrounded; they were conscious of this superiority, and they made others conscious of it. They were all of them born subjects, and became fortunate usurpers. Had Cæsar been placed in Persia, he would have made the conquest of India; in Arabia, he would have been the founder of a new religion; in London, he would have stabbed his sovereign or have procured his assassination, under the sanction of the laws. He reigned with glory over men whom he reduced to be slaves, and under one aspect he is to be considered a hero, under another as a monster. But it would be unfortunate, indeed, for society, if the possession of superior talents, gave individuals a right to disturb its repose. Usurpers, accordingly, have flatterers, but no friends; strangers respect them; their subjects complain and submit; it is in their own fami-

have done more that way now, in a little while, since the lies that humanity finds its avengers. Cæsar was assassinated by his son; Mohammed was poisoned by his wife; Kouli Khan was massacred by his nephew, and Cromwell only died in his bed because his son Richard was a philosopher. Cæsar, the tyrant of his country; Cæsar, who destroyed the agents of his crimes if they failed in address; Cæsar, in fine, the husband of every wife, and wife of every husband—has been accounted a great man by the mob of writers. But it is only the philosopher who knows how to mark the barrier between celebrity and greatness. The talents of this singular man, and the good fortune which constantly attended him till the moment of his assassination, have concealed the enormities of his actions.”

It was said of Cæsar by Cato, that he came with sobriety and meditation to the subversion of the republic. If to these we add his valor, good fortune, and matchless talents, his extraordinary success cannot surprise us. He was now in the complete possession of every substantial power of a monarch; and though his rule was justly offensive to patriotism, it came recommended by its vigor and admirable clemency, and but for a wonderful departure from habitual prudence, might have been stable. The destroyer of the liberties of Rome—he next attacked her prejudices, and from a senseless longing for the trappings of power, he lost at once its essence and his life. A report, by his means, was spread abroad, that the Sibylline verses had foretold the invincibility of Parthia, unless assailed by a king, and now prepared for his eastern expedition, Cotta, his creature, one of the guardians of those verses, was directed to move the senate at its next meeting to decree to him that title. Thus by his impatience to be in name as in power, a king, were the patriots stimulated to give effect to their already conceived design to restore the republic by his murder.

Marcus Junius Brutus, the chief of the conspiracy, descended from that Brutus who destroyed the monarchy of Tarquin, had deeply mourned the lost freedom of his country, and had resolved at every hazard, to destroy the

tyrant. "He was the more animated to this great enterprize by the entreaties of Cassius and others, imploring him to undertake the deliverance of Rome, and urging it as a high debt entailed upon him by his family."* Sprung as we have said from the great patriot of his name, and a descendant also through his mother, of Servilius Ahala, famous for the murder of Mælius, who had seditiously aspired to the monarchy,† Brutus was himself the uncompromising enemy of tyranny, and mindful of the virtues of his race, is on all hands allowed to have been prompted to his great act by love of country, and that alone; whilst his associates are generally supposed to have been impelled, not so much by hatred of the imperial power, as by envy of its possessor.

Brutus had shared largely in the affections of Cæsar; had been signally favored and advanced by him, and was in every way so distinguished that he would have been the first man in Rome could he have "had patience awhile to be the second, and waited till time had wasted the power of Cæsar, or dimmed the lustre of his great actions."‡ But neither gratitude to Cæsar, nor well founded hopes of power could shake the determined purpose of his soul.

The motives of Cassius, the next of rank in this lofty scheme, have been as we have stated, but probably with no justice, suspected. His hostility to the usurper was thought at the time to have sprung from a conversion to his own use by Cæsar, of some lions, which he had provided when nominated ædile; and in our day, it is by many believed that this Roman did what he did in envy of great Cæsar;§ but "it would seem that he had a natural aversion to the whole race of tyrants, which he showed even when he was at school with Faustus the son of Sylla. When Faustus was boasting among the boys of the unlimited power of his father, Cassius rose and struck him on the face. The friends and tutors of Faustus would have taken it on themselves to punish the insult, but Pompey prevented it, and sending for the boys, examined them himself; upon which

* Plutarch in Brut.

† Ibid,

‡ Ibid.

§ Shakspeare.

Cassius said, come along Faustus, repeat if you dare before Pompey the expressions which provoked me, that I may punish you in the same manner; such was the disposition of Cassius.”* He had moreover a stimulus to the act which has made him famous in the renown of his ancestors, no less zealous than those of Brutus for the public liberty;† and it is certain, not only performed his part with sagacity and unflinching courage, but bravely died, rather than beg the mercy of his conquerors; falling, at his own earnest entreaty, by the hand of his freedman Pindarus.‡

The rest of the chiefs were of different character, and even more than Brutus, bound by good offices to their victim; “and the remaining conspirators,” says Middleton, “partly noble, and partly obscure, were prompted by personal hate, and eager to revenge the ruin of their fortunes and families.”

The circumstances of the death of this noblest of all usurpers, are too familiar to need full notice here. It is enough to say, that the assassins prevailed, and the mighty Julius fell; when Brutus, lifting the bloody dagger, called aloud upon Cicero, who was present,§ to congratulate with him upon the recovery of their liberties.||

The conspirators had not seen fit to impart their design to Cicero; and we incline to believe, in all deference to Dr. Middleton, that, as Plutarch has surmised, they were influenced in withholding the secret, by their fears of his natural deficiency of courage, as well as his time of life, at which the boldest begin to droop; nor can we think with the Doctor, that a sense of his character and dignity could have prevented the disclosure of an intended act, than which its perpetrators conceived none more exalted; and

* Plutarch.

† In the second philippic, Cicero speaks of Cassius as born of a family, impatient not only of sovereignty, but superiority.

‡ Plutarch in Ant.

§ Quid mihi attulerit ista domini mutatio, præter lætitiā quam oculis cepi justo interritu tyranni. Ad. Att. 14. xiv.

|| Cæsare interfecto, statim cruentem alte extollens Marcus Brutus pugionem, *Ciceronem* nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem est gratulatus.—*Philk.* 2. 12.

which, in Cicero's own judgment, repeatedly avowed, was worth the most glorious immortality.*

The tragedy which had been consummated, was, as is known, fruitless, so far as the recovery of freedom was its object; and there was in the plan at its inception, a defect, growing out of the sense of justice and humanity of Brutus, fatal to its success, and ultimately to himself. The death of Antony had been urged by many of the conspirators, as scarcely less important than that of Cæsar. Cassius so thought it: but with the rest, was overruled by Brutus, who was of opinion, that "an action, undertaken in support of justice and the laws, should have nothing unjust about it."† Cicero often spoke of, and deplored this defect, and leads us to believe, that had he been in the secret, it would never have occurred. "Oh that you had invited me," he says to Cassius, "to that glorious feast you exhibited on the ides of March. Be assured, I would have suffered none of it to have gone off untouched." And to Trebonius he writes: "to say the truth, when I reflect that it is owing to the favor of so worthy a man as you, that Antony now lives to be our bane, I am sometimes inclined to be a little angry with you for taking him aside, when Cæsar fell." It is, however, impossible to disapprove the mag-

*In the tragedy of Julius Cæsar, Brutus assigns a reason for the orator's exclusion, from which bigotry must be inferred. We think, however, that in many of those measures, where that fault may have been suspected, there was nothing more than an honest assurance of their wisdom. At any rate, if Cicero were a bigot, it is certain that on some occasions, he took the course not unusual with that class of persons, and with some stoutness denied it.—*Ad. Brutum*, 15.

Cas. But what of Cicero? Shall we sound him?

I think he will stand very strong with us:

Casca. Let us not leave him out.

Cin. No, by no means.

Met. O let us have him; for his silver hairs

Will purchase us a good opinion,

And buy men's voices to commend our deeds:

It shall be said his judgment ruled our hands;

Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear,

But all be buried in his gravity.

Brutus. O, name him not; let us not break with him;

For he will never follow any thing

That other men begin.

Cas. Then leave him out.

Shakspeare.

† Plutarch.

unanimous justice of Brutus ; and this act is, of itself, proof of the holiness of his design.

It must here be conceded, that Antony, consul at the time, showed himself a far abler politician than the most of them. Terribly alarmed at first, he absconded in the guise of a slave ; but understanding that the death of the dictator was alone intended, and that the conspirators were friendly to pacific measures, he was emboldened to invite them down from the capitol ; and to assure them, sent his son as a hostage ; upon which he proceeded with great art to mature the plans to which we shall presently refer. He also, about this time, brought Lepidus, who was afterwards triumvir, into his views. That general was then at the head of a powerful force, in the immediate neighborhood of the city, had contemplated the seizure of the government for himself, and, in the distraction of the time, might have succeeded, had not Antony dissuaded him, "representing the hazard and difficulty of the attempt, while the senate, the city, and all Italy, were against them ; that the only way to effect what they wished, was to dissemble their real purpose, to recommend pacific counsels, and lull their adversaries asleep, till they had provided a strength sufficient to oppress them ; and that as soon as things were ripe, he would join with him very heartily in avenging Cæsar's death." Lepidus, a weak vain man, was easily prevailed upon to submit to his direction, and was kept in Italy so long as his presence was of service to him.

The senate being summoned, he proposed an amnesty, and had address to secure the ratification of the acts of Cæsar, by which he was afterwards enabled to direct matters at pleasure. These steps of the consul have gained for him the praise of Plutarch, who seems to have thought him honest in his declared desire of peace, that he acquitted himself in this affair with the highest reputation, and that by saving Rome from a civil war, he proved himself a very able and valuable politician. It is due, however, to Cicero, to state, that from the first, he had no confidence in his assurances, and says, in one of his philippics,

that he remonstrated against treating with him, that it could not be done with safety, that as long as he was afraid of them he would promise any thing, but that when his fears were over, he would be like himself, and perform nothing; so that whilst the other consular senators were going backwards and forwards in offices of mediation, he adhered to his point, staid with the rest in the capitol, and did not see Antony for the two first days.*

In the funeral oration which was made by Antony, on this occasion, he was so eloquent in his praise of Cæsar, and dwelt with such pathos, upon his love and liberality to the Roman people, that to remain in Rome was no longer safe for the conspirators, so greatly was the popular feeling inflamed. The oration had been made with this view, and with the exhibition of Cæsar's bloody robe, succeeded effectually; most of them leaving Rome at once, and Cicero soon following. It would seem, from his reception in the country, that out of the city the joy at the dictator's death was extravagant; and, in truth, though the consul had succeeded in creating such disorders, his power was, in a great degree, confined to the soldiers and strangers, and particularly Jews, who had not forgotten Pompey for his outrage to their temple, and were warm in their regard for Cæsar.† "It is impossible," says Cicero, "to express what joy there is every where, how all people flock about one, how greedy they are to hear an account of it from me! yet what strange politics do we pursue? What a solecism do we commit? To be afraid of those whom we have subdued; to defend his acts, for whose death we rejoice; to suffer tyranny to live, when the tyrant is killed, and the republick to be lost when our liberty is recovered.‡

Antony having by his art, or to say the truth, his great

* 2 Phil. xxxv.

† In a contest between Hircanus and Aristobulus, for the crown, Pompey, when entrusted with the conduct of the war against Mithridates, had seized the opportunity to take Jerusalem, and though he spared the treasures of the temple, he had profaned it by his entrance with his officers into the holy of holies, where none but the high priest was admitted.

‡ Ad. Atticum. 14. 6.

abilities, deceived Brutus and the rest, and secured such decrees from the senate as enabled him to act, had well used the leisure which the too great confidence of the republican party had afforded, had gathered troops about him with which he forced other decrees reluctantly conceded, and, in short, made himself for the time, irresistible. The oversight, in exempting him from death, was now obvious; and it was clear, that Cicero's counsels, if attended to, might have delayed the fall of the republic.

His hatred, which, in truth, had never been extinguished, though it suited him to feign even the warmest regard for Cicero, was now so much embittered by the friendship of the latter with Brutus, and his great weight in the administration, that we are told he could hardly bear his presence;* and we cannot think that the dislike of Cicero was at all less rancorous, though it is certain that about this time, in a letter to the consul, his civilities were unmeasured. By the way, it is astonishing to see with what adulation he often addresses men, of whose character and principles he professedly felt with abhorrence. Is it possible, for example, without amazement, to read the following letter. Antony informed him that he had obtained from Cæsar the recall of Sextus Clodius, the son of Cicero's old enemy, but that he was determined not to make use of that indulgence, unless it met his approval.

"There is one reason," he replies, "why I wish you had treated with me in person, rather than by letter, for then you might have discovered the affection I bear you, not only by the expression of my lips, but by the emotions of my countenance. You endeared yourself first to me by your attachment, and next by your services to my person; and your public behavior at this period has been such, as sets you equal to any man alive in my esteem. Your letter, which is so full of love and respect for me, has affected me in such a manner, that I seem not to bestow, but receive a favor, since your request is attended with an assur-

ance, that unless I give you leave, you will not deliver an old friend because he is my enemy, while at the same time you might effect his deliverance without danger or difficulty.”* In sending Antony’s letter, and his answer to it, to Atticus, Cicero writes: “I send you a copy that you may see with what respect he treats me; but, at the same time, you must readily conclude his *request to be so abandoned, so scandalous, so pernicious*, that we are tempted to wish that Cæsar were again alive: for what Cæsar never would have done, never would have suffered to be even proposed, he is now proposing from Cæsar’s forged journals. For my part, I most cheerfully yield to Antony’s request, which he would have carried through, even though I had opposed it.” Comment here is emphatically needless; the letter, however, appears to have been too strong, even for its writer’s eulogist; he omits it, with others, well calculated to weaken his applause.

Again, for his late son-in-law Dolabella, consul with Antony, Cicero had no feeling of respect; and, in truth, as Middleton has it, had long known him to be void of all virtue and good principles; yet in a letter to Atticus, and in another to Dolabella himself, he extols the conduct of the latter, in the suppression of some disorders growing out of a frantic display of friendship for Cæsar, in terms of such actual rapture, that one would suppose he deemed his conduct on a level with the great deed of Brutus. Besides, the letter to Dolabella abounds in professions of ardent personal attachment. It is vain to justify such duplicity as called for by the interests of the republick. Cicero is guilty of it, when no such motive can be alledged, or could have operated.†

* To use one of Cicero’s own remarks, “it was on this occasion fortunate that letters do not blush.”

† We rather suspect that the only effect of this high wrought letter to Dolabella, who was beyond all doubt a scoundrel, was to induce him to withhold payment of a considerable debt to his panegyrist; for we find Cicero, a short time afterwards, telling Atticus, that owing to this fact, he had sent Dolabella a pretty sharp letter, which he believes, if it had no other effect, would have that of making him not dare to look him in the face. Ad. Att. xiv. xviii.

He is at this period unreserved in his expressions of hatred of the fair queen of Egypt, who was in Rome when her illustrious paramour was slain, and seems to have had an interview with the enchantress in Cæsar's gardens, at which he was promised a variety of presents, which are not named, but supposed to have been of a nature to delight such a man : probably statues, or curiosities from Egypt for his libraries.* The promise was never fulfilled : but we can scarcely ascribe the strong feeling of the letters we present, to that fact; but rather to the haughty carriage of the queen, or to some other indignity, at which they appear to hint;—connected, it may be, with the presents themselves. "The flight of the queen," he writes, "gives me no pain.† I should be glad to hear what further news there is of her and her young Cæsar.‡ I hate the queen; her agent Ammonius, the witness and sponsor of her promise to me, knows that I have cause. They were things only proper to a man of letters and suitable to my character; so that I should not scruple to proclaim them from the rostra. Her other agent, Sara, is a rascal, and has been rude to me. I never saw him at my house but once; and when I asked him civilly, what commands he had for me, he said that he came to look for Atticus. As to the pride of the queen, when I saw her in the gardens, I can never think of it without resentment. I will have nothing, therefore, to do with them; they take me to have neither spirit, or even feelings left."§

Antony had gained so great power, by means of Cæsar's funeral, and seemed so willing further to inflame the passions, which the ensanguined robe, and his own pathetic eloquence had evoked, that it was generally supposed he would attempt an absolute rule. Cicero, seeing how formidable he had become, and that there was no prospect, at least not until the new consuls Hirtius and Pansa came into office, of a diminution of his power, and mindful of his real hatred, designed at first to avoid all danger, and accompany Dolabella into Syria; but at the entreaty of the

* Middleton.

† Ad. Att. 14. 8.

‡ Ibid, 20.

§ Ibid, 15. 15.

consuls elect, was prevailed with to drop that purpose; and though he had no great reliance upon their scheme, promised to be with them when in power, at which time, they assured him that with his assistance, Antony might be crushed.* In the mean time, it was his intention to go to Athens, in which he was the more confirmed, as in addition to his own safety, he thought he could be of great service in completing the education of his son, then at that seat of learning; and he in fact set out towards Greece; but the voyage being arrested by a succession of contrary winds, on intelligence of a most favorable change in Antony, "that he had discharged his wicked advisers; dropped his pretensions to the province of Gaul; and was disposed to submit to the authority of the senate, and treat amicably with Brutus and Cassius, the Grecian visit was abandoned.†" In an interview, the last he ever had with that true and noble Roman, Brutus frankly told him that he had escaped two great imputations on his character: the one, of a too hasty despair of the common cause; the other, the vanity of going to the Olympic games; at which Cicero thanks the winds for preserving him from infamy.

He discovered before he reached Rome that he had been deceived, as to the conciliatory views of Antony; and though his reception was to the last degree flattering, "almost a whole day being spent at the gates, and on his way home, in compliments and congratulations,"‡ he declined to attend the senate, alledging, in excuse, the fatigues of his journey, but in reality, as is said, in dread of assassination. The consul was highly incensed at his absence, and threatened, if he did not come, to burn down his house; but was at last persuaded to desist. At the next meeting of the senate, however, when Antony did not think fit to confront him, Cicero spoke as became a patriot, "did not hesitate incidentally to extol the noble act of Brutus; rebuked with no reserve the baseness of the senate, in decreeing extraordinary honors to the memory of Cæsar; polluting the

* Plutarch.

† Ad. Att. xvi. viii. 1 Phil.

‡ Plutarch.

republic with so detestable a religion, and blending the honors of the gods with those of a dead man; and told them that in case of any accidents, of which many seemed to surround him, he would leave that day's speech as a monument of his perpetual fidelity to his country. That he had now reaped the full fruits of his return, by giving a full testimony of his constant adherence to the public interests; that he would use the same liberty oftener if he found he could do it with safety, if not he would reserve himself as well as he could to better times, not so much from regard to himself as to the republic."*

He seems to have thought very early after this speech that the state of things referred to at its conclusion had arrived, and to have determined to resort to the alternative he speaks of, by withdrawal to reserve himself till better times, for the republic. The propriety of this step, viewed in relation to his stern duty as a patriot, may admit of question; but of the imminency of his danger we think there can be none. The object of his early and unextinguished hate, there was no hope of mercy from Antony: he believed him to have been privy to the murder of Cæsar, his friend and the parent of his power, knew him to have extolled that act, and above all, saw him in the way of his hopes, as an eloquent assailant in the senate. By policy, therefore, as well as hatred, was Antony impelled to his ruin; and the late violence foreboded no delicacy in his means of destruction. The rupture now inevitable, Cicero consulting his personal safety, withdrew to a villa near Naples, where he prepared his second philippic, which appears as if pronounced in the senate, but was not so in fact; nor was it immediately published.

We may learn his fears, and the grounds of them, from letters to Cassius and Plancus, written a short time after the first philippic. But this he writes, "is a danger which I am

* Philippic 1. 4. 6. 15. Cicero named his speeches against Antony, of which there are fourteen, and which were also called Antonians, after the famous speeches of Demosthenes against the king of Macedon, which as every one knows were styled philippics.

not afraid to hazard, since he gives me a share in the honors of that glorious deed; hence it is, however, that neither Piso, who first ventured to inveigh against the measures of Antony, nor myself who made a speech to the same purpose, about a month afterwards, nor Publius Servilius, who followed my example, can any of us appear with safety in the senate; for this inhuman gladiator has evidently a design upon our lives, and he hoped to have rendered me the first victim of his cruel vengeance. With this sanguinary view he entered the senate on the 19th of September, having several days before retired to the villa of Metellus in order to prepare an inflammatory speech against me." And again to Plancus: "Agreeably to the friendship which exists between us, my services should not be wanting to advance your dignities, if I could have been present in the senate consistently with my honor or safety. But no man can freely deliver his opinions in that assembly without being exposed to the violences of a military force, that is licensed to commit its outrages with impunity, and it would ill become my rank and character to speak upon public affairs, in a place where I am more attentively observed and more closely surrounded by soldiers than by senators. But where your interests may be equally advanced without my concurrence, suffer me, I entreat you, to pay a proper regard to my own dignity and preservation."

It has been seen that Brutus and Cassius, deeming themselves in danger at Rome, had retired, in consequence of the excitement growing out of Cæsar's funeral, in which the treachery of Antony had been but too plainly revealed. At the time of their departure, they do not seem to have fixed upon any plan of action, and indeed it was with that view, that they withdrew to a villa, belonging to Brutus, near Lanuvium. Determined to act all in honor, at this momentous crisis of their fortunes, no scheme was yet matured, and it was concluded to await patiently the meeting of the senate, when as they supposed, the consuls would disclose their humor and views both with regard to them-

selves and the republic.* And here it is impossible to withhold our admiration from that high-souled devotion to Rome, and neglect of self, by which from the outset they had been animated, and now in their noble declaration revealed "that their conduct should give no handle to a civil war; and that they would submit to a perpetual exile, if it would contribute in any manner, to the public concord; being content with the consciousness of their act as the greatest honor they could enjoy."†

Meanwhile Antony, with accustomed skill, was sparing no effort to consolidate his power, and had prevailed by bribes and otherwise in securing the veteran soldiers to his interests. In this there was but little difficulty, as their love of Cæsar was ardent, and his memory the more dear, because of his recent and so tragic death. Above all, he had possessed himself of the sinews of power, being now master of the immense public treasure which had been placed in the temple of Ops, and Calpurnia, the wife of Cæsar, having entrusted to him her large private fortune amounting to four thousand talents. To these means he added another most effective. The senate, it will be remembered, had ratified the acts of the usurper, and Antony having made himself the depositary of his papers, was enabled, on pretence of anxiety, to give effect to his real designs, and by forging others to suit his own purposes, to control, as we have hinted, in a great degree, the movements of the state. There is good ground, nevertheless, to believe that the public feeling in regard to him, was by no means friendly, and it may be thought from hints in the philippics, and letters of Cicero, that the whole empire, if there had been a leader, would at this time have declared against him, and that Dolabella if honest might have saved the republic. Plutarch also, in his life of Brutus, says that Antony became obnoxious to the people; for they suspected him of

* Middleton.

† Testati edictis, libenter se vel in perpetuo exilio victuros, dum reipub. constaret concordia, nec ullam belli civilis præbituros materiam: plurimum sibi honoris esse in conscientia facti sui.—*Vcl. Pat.* 2. 62.

erecting another kind of monarchy. It is not improbable that the consul may have had his fears, and it is certain that he felt the importance of his colleague; for he at once purchased his alliance by a division of the treasure he had seized, and by a promise of a share in plunder to come; * nor is there any doubt that it was principally through his means, that the presence of Brutus and Cassius, who were prætors, was dispensed with; though valuable to him as was their absence, he was opposed to the commission to purchase corn in Asia and Sicily, at this time entrusted to them; well knowing that it would offer a pretext as well as facilities for strengthening the cause in which they were enlisted.† They, on the other hand, had narrowly watched his irregular course; but had up to this moment shown their displeasure only in remonstrance; still cherishing, it would seem, some hopes of his probity. Indeed Brutus had hopes of him to the last, and thought it not improbable that his love of glory would inspire him with an emulation to join in restoring the commonwealth.‡ On the expiration, however, of their prætorship, Brutus and Cassius rejected the meaner provinces, which through his intrigues had been confided to them, and left Italy; the one for Macedonia, the other for Syria, governments designed for them by Cæsar. But it was no part of Antony's intention to abandon these without a struggle; he had them, therefore, decreed to himself and colleague, and despatching his brother Caius into Macedonia, to take possession, Dolabella repaired to Syria; and now was in effect proclaimed the war, which closed at Philippi, in the final ruin of the republic.

While in Athens, Brutus though apparently devoted to letters was secretly preparing for war, and won by his kindness the Roman youth, who were then students in that city; and among others the young Cicero, on whom says Plutarch he bestowed the highest encomiums; declaring that he could never cease admiring the spirit of that young

* Middleton.

† Appian.

‡ Plutarch.

man, who bore such mortal hatred to tyrants. Of this son we shall speak hereafter, and will now only say of him, that though frail to no common extent, we believe posterity to have been too lavish of its blame, and that his real character deserved its far gentler verdict.

SECTION V.

WE are here to introduce a personage hitherto unnamed, and till now obscure, but who was at no distant period to make the greatest figure at Rome, and in the accomplishment of whose destiny, the republican liberties of his country, were speedily and finally to be lost in despotic power.

Octavianus, afterwards surnamed* Augustus, the son of Octavius, and Attia the niece of Cæsar, had been declared by the dictator the heir to his name and estates; and was at the time of his uncle's assassination at college in Macedonia, whence it was designed that he should accompany his renowned relative into Parthia. On intelligence of Cæsar's fate, he returned instantly to Italy, and prepared at once boldly to assert his claims, and push his fortunes. On his arrival he found the power of Antony almost absolute, and the consul himself unwilling to surrender the money and effects he had seized. Great as were the difficulties, the young man in spite of the caution of his friends, who

* "The obscure name of Octavianus he derived from a mean family in the little town of Aricia. It was stained with the blood of the proscription, and he was desirous, had it been possible, to erase all memory of his former life. The illustrious surname he had assumed as the adopted son of the Dictator, but he had too much good sense to hope to be confounded, or to wish to be compared with that extraordinary man. It was proposed in the senate to dignify their minister with a new appellation, and after a very serious discussion, that of Augustus was chosen, among several others, as being most expressive of the character of peace and sanctity which he uniformly affected."—*Gibbon*. Munatius Plancus proposed the name of Augustus. The name of Romulus was suggested, and was acceptable to Octavius, but was abandoned, lest he should be thought to affect a kingdom. Persons adopted into a family, as was the case with Octavius, sometimes joined to their new names that of their own family, giving it the form of a surname; thus C. Octavius took the name of Caius, Julius Cæsar Octavianus. The splendid historian we have quoted would seem to have overlooked this fact.

were alarmed at a collision with the consul, and regardless of his mother's entreaties, proceeded with spirit to subdue them. "His conversation was elegant and insinuating, his face comely and graceful, and his affection to the late dictator so sincere, that all were charmed either with his piety or address." Assuming the name of Cæsar, he made a speech to the people, and rendered himself popular by a representation of the shows and plays, which his uncle had designed in honor of his victories: a suit was brought against Antony for the recovery of the effects; many of the soldiers, won by his name and money, were induced to support him, and finally distributing to the people the sums left them in the will, he was enabled to take the lead of his enemy.

Octavianus had been presented to Cicero immediately on his return from Macedonia, and seems to have thought his friendship of the utmost importance to his hopes. Professing the highest veneration for his character, he solicited at once his assistance, and avowed a determination to be governed exclusively by his will. It is clear from the letters to Atticus, that Cicero was much embarrassed as to the course he should pursue, and that he was any thing but assured that a straight conduct might be looked for from the young Cæsar. Indeed he had the worst opinion of him, and though it impossible that, surrounded as he was, he could make a good citizen. "Octavius," he writes, "is still with us, and treats me with the greatest respect and friendship; his domestics give him the name of Cæsar. Philip* does not; nor for that reason do I. It is not possible for him in my opinion to make a good citizen; there are so many about him who threaten the death of our friends; they declare that what they have done can never be forgiven. What will be the case think you when the boy comes to Rome, where our deliverers cannot shew their heads? who yet must ever be famous, nay happy too, in the consciousness of their act. But as for us, unless I am

* Philip was married to Attia, Cæsar's mother.

deceived, we shall be undone; I long therefore to go abroad where I may hear no more of these Pelopidæ," &c.*

These doubts were the more strengthened by the course of Octavius on reaching Rome, in which Cicero thought that he manifested a strong desire not merely to keep alive the memory of his uncle, but a disposition to revenge his death. He nevertheless, had determined to cherish him, for the reason the following letter discloses, though he professed to have no wish for such a saviour: "Octavianus I perceive has parts and spirit, and seems to be affected as we could wish towards our friends; but how far we may trust his age, name, succession, education, is a matter of great deliberation; his father-in-law thinks that we ought not at all to confide in him; he must be cherished however, if for nothing else, yet to keep him at a distance from Antony. He seems to be much influenced by Marcellus, but to have no confidence in Pansa and Hirtius: his natural disposition is good, if it does but hold."†

It would however appear, from subsequent letters, that his mind was still greatly fluctuating, and that his chief fears were by no means silenced. "I had two letters from Octavianus; he presses me to come immediately to Rome, is resolved, he says, to do nothing without the senate, without my advice; in a word, he urges: I hang back. I cannot trust his age, *do not know his real intentions*; will do nothing without Pansa; am afraid that Antony will prove too strong for him; unwilling too to stir from the sea; and yet *dread lest any glorious measure should be executed in my absence*. Varro does not like the conduct of the boy, but I do. He has firm troops, and may join with Decimus Brutus. What he does, he does openly; musters his soldiers at Capua, pays them: we shall have a war I see instantly."‡ Again: "I have letters every day from Octavianus, to *take upon me the direction of affairs*; to come to him at Capua; to *save the state a second time*; he resolves to come directly to Rome.

"Urged to the fight 'tis shameful to refuse,
Whilst fear yet prompts the safer part to choose."

* Ad. Att. vii. xii.

† Ibid. xv. xii.

‡ Ibid. xvi. ix.

“Meanwhile his solicitations have been and still are urgent; he will come to Rome with great force; yet he is but a boy; he thinks the senate may be called immediately; but who will come? or if they do, who in this uncertainty of affairs will declare against Antony? he will be a good guard to us on the first of January, or we may come perhaps to blows before. The great towns favor the boy strangely; they flock to him from all parts, and exhort him to proceed. Could you have ever thought it?”* Again: “I have really nothing to write to you, for when I was at Puteoli I daily heard some news from Octavianus, and many false reports concerning Antony. In answer to your letters, I entirely agree with you that should Octavianus come into power, the acts of Cæsar will receive a firmer sanction than they did in the temple of Tellus, and this will turn out to the disadvantage of Brutus. But should Octavius be worsted you will find Antony an intolerable tyrant; thus one does not know what to wish for.”

The mind of Cicero, hesitating up to this moment, was soon determined by an act of Antony, and by a sacrifice of feeling on the part of Cæsar, which as a politician, could not have cost him the slightest effort. Antony, alarmed at the power of his crafty rival, and learning that some of the legions in Italy, upon which he relied, had not only abandoned his interests, but declared for Cæsar, left Rome precipitately, and put himself at the head of the troops he had secured, with a view to the forcible possession of Cisalpine Gaul; and immediately upon his withdrawal Cicero came to the city; still resolved to withhold all aid from Octavius, unless assured of his friendship to Brutus, and declaring that he would do nothing for him until the first of January, before which there would be an opportunity to try his disposition in the case of Casca, who had been named by Cæsar to the tribunate; for if Octavius did not oppose or disturb his admission, that would be a proof of his good intentions. Casca not being disturbed, Cicero was now the ally, and effectively so, of Cæsar.

* *Ad. Atticum. xvj. xi.*

Meanwhile Decimus Brutus, seizing upon Cisalpine Gaul, had forbidden Antony to enter it, and the war was now raging in the heart of Italy, which was to decide the fate of the empire. It was at this juncture, that Cicero, in the senate, prevailed in advancing the power and dignity of Cæsar against his old enemy. We cannot doubt that he was most artfully managed by his boy ally, and it does seem extraordinary, that the slight sacrifice to which we have referred, and upon which he professed to look as an indubitable criterion, should have been allowed the least weight in his decision. It was, however, we think, the dictate of wisdom, in the absence of all proof of bad design on the part of Cæsar, to use the power, which by his industry, bribes and skill, he had secured, in resistance to a man of whose nefarious purposes no doubt could exist, and who was in fact, already in arms, avowedly to sustain his party, but in reality, warring against the commonwealth. Indeed Cæsar had rendered himself so important as to make his employment not so much a matter of opinion as of necessity. His power it has been seen was such as to have impelled Antony to try his fortune in the field, and it cannot be supposed that he would willingly have relinquished his command, or have forgone at once the golden hopes he had cherished from the moment that he felt his consequence.

The senate did not at this moment see fit to proceed against Antony as a public enemy; and there was found a sufficient number in that body, successfully to withstand the eloquence of Cicero, who condemned all delay. After a warm debate it was resolved to try first, if by an embassy an accommodation might not be realized. In the meantime the following honors were, at Cicero's suggestion, decreed.

“Whereas Decimus Brutus, consul elect, now holds the province of Gaul in the power of the senate and people of Rome, and by the cheerful assistance of the towns and colonies of his province, has drawn together a great army in a short time, and has done this rightfully and regularly, and for the service of the state, it is the sense, therefore, of the senate and people, that the republic has been re-

lieved in a most difficult conjuncture, by the pains, counsels and virtue of Decimus Brutus, emperor, and consul elect, and by the incredible zeal and concurrence of the province of Gaul." Then, after decreeing honors also to Lepidus, he proposes lastly in favor of Cæsar, that they should grant him a proper commission and command over his "troops, without which he could be of no use to them; that he should have the rank and all the rights of a pro-prætor; that he should be henceforward a senator, and vote in the rank and place of a prætor; and that in soliciting any future magistracy, the same regard be had to him, as would have been shown by law, had he been quæstor the year before."*

The co-operation of Octavius with the state at this juncture, was no doubt important; but it does not seem to have been necessary to secure it, that the senate should have been thus lavish of its honors to a child. Indeed the boy at the mere suggestion of his new ally, without its sanction, was already in arms and on his way to the conflict.

It is plain from the philippic accompanying these decrees, part of which we insert, that if Cicero were sound in his view of the constitution of the human mind, which may well admit of question, he was sadly, or rather as we fear, wilfully wrong in his estimate of the character and views of Cæsar, with whose inward sentiments, in the face of his so recent positive assurance to the contrary, he now professed to be familiar. "As to those," he said, "who think these honors too great for so young a man, their apprehensions are the effect of envy rather than fear; since the nature of things was such, that he who had once got a taste of true glory, and found himself universally dear to the senate and people, could never think any other acquisition equal to it. He wished that Julius Cæsar had taken the same course when young, of endearing himself to the senate and honest men, but in neglecting it he spent the force of his great genius in acquiring a vain popularity,

and having no regard to the senate and better sort, opened himself a way to power, which the virtue of a free people could not bear; that there was nothing of this sort to be feared from his son; nor after the proof of such admirable prudence in a boy, any ground to imagine that his riper years would be less prudent; for what greater folly could there be than to prefer an useless power, an invidious greatness, always slippery and tottering, to true, weighty, solid glory? If they suspected him to be an enemy of some of the best and most valued citizens, they might lay aside their fears; that he had given up all his resentments to the republic, made her the moderatrix of all his acts; *that he knew the most inward sentiments of the youth, would pawn his credit for him to the senate and people, would promise, engage, undertake, that he would always be the same that he now was; such as they would wish and desire to see him.*" *

Upon the whole, we think it inferrible from the character of Cicero, and from the extracts we have presented, that he was prompted to his alliance with Cæsar, by his vanity, artfully assailed, by "hatred and fear of Antony, and avidity for honor," and not by an honest conviction, that in heightening the dignity, and strengthening the power of his ally, he was promoting the true interests of Rome: for it is to the last degree improbable, that in the short space of a few weeks, his mind, with no apparent cause, could have undergone so thorough a change, as not merely to have repelled its late strong distrust, but have admitted in its stead, an admiration the most exorbitant, and withal so assured, as to induce an unqualified pledge of the perpetual fidelity of Cæsar.

If we may judge from the course of Cicero in the public councils, as disclosed in his celebrated philippics, his hopes of the republic were now completely revived. They were based, it would seem, upon a confident reliance on the probity of the consuls, Pansa and Hirtius, who, though owing their elevation to Cæsar, were yet, so far apparently unin-

fluenced by his memory, as neither to desire the ruin of Brutus, nor generally to thwart the proposed measures against Antony.* Again, if his admiration of Octavius, so hastily conceived, were sincere, in his power and disposition honestly to use it, he might well see a further pledge of success; whilst the intelligence from the absent patriots gave flattering promise of succor from abroad. Besides, though it is certain, that in the senate there was no mean party so far friendly to Antony, as to discountenance its severer edicts against him, that body appears at the time to have been not unmindful of its dignity and rights, and to have felt the weight of his admonition to preserve them; and lastly, he indulged a feeling, which he professed to think well founded, and now avowed, "that the season of liberty was come, much later indeed than became the Roman people, but then so ripe that it could not be deferred a moment. What we have hitherto suffered was owing to a kind of fatality, which we have borne as well as we could, but if any such case should happen again, it must be owing to ourselves. It is not possible for the people of Rome to be slaves, whom the gods have destined to the command of all nations: the affair is now reduced to the last extremity; the struggle is for liberty; it is your part either to conquer, which will surely be the fruit of your piety and concord, or to suffer any thing rather than to live slaves: other nations may endure slavery, but the proper end and business of the Roman people is, liberty.†"

How far his faith in the patriotism of the consuls would have been realized, it is not possible to say; for at the moment when they might have influenced the destinies of Rome, it was the fortune of both to be slain in battle. The honor and virtue of the senate, were soon prostituted to successful power, and that he was utterly wrong in his public estimate of Cæsar and the Roman people, his own mournful fate and the imperial domination attest.

* Ut oratio consulum animum meum erexit, spemque attulit non modo salutis conservandæ, verum etiam dignitatis pristinæ recuperandæ.—*Phil.* 5. 1.

† *Phil.* 6. iv. vi.

The embassy to which we have referred, and which of itself betrayed the influence of the public enemy in the senate, had issued as Cicero predicted. Antony would not suffer the ambassadors to perform any thing required of them, nor allow them even to speak with Brutus, whom he had some time before besieged in Modena; but continued to batter the town with great fury in their presence.* He vouchsafed, however, to propose some conditions himself, in which it will be seen, that humility had no very prominent share, which, though in positive disobedience to their instructions, the ambassadors received. These contemplated ample rewards to his army, as if it had been rendering signal services to Rome, instead of menacing her freedom; and provided that all his decrees upon Cæsar's papers should stand firm, and that all account of the treasure stolen from the temple of Ops should be dispensed with; upon which terms he condescended to surrender Cisalpine Gaul; though not without the lordly proviso, that he might have the greater Gaul in exchange, for five years, with an army of six legions, to be completed out of the very troops he was besieging. These stipulations were with no hesitation rejected.

It had been before determined, not to await the result of the embassy in the preparation for war. The consuls agreed to act at once. Pansa was to remain at home, and perfect the new levies, while Hirtius should proceed into Gaul, and in conjunction with Cæsar prosecute the war: Cæsar having, as we have already stated, though without the sanction of the senate, taken the field. A struggle for Modena not long afterwards ensued, between the armies of Antony and the consuls; Cæsar and his troops fighting with the latter.

The Philippics inform us of the state of Brutus, and his hopes at this period in Macedonia. "He had advised the consuls of his success against Antony's brother Caius, in securing Macedonia, Illyricum and Greece, with all the

* Middleton.

several armies in those countries, to the interests of the republic; that Caius Antony was retired to Apollonia, with seven cohorts, where a good account would soon be given of him; that a legion under L. Piso, had surrendered itself to young Cicero, the commander of his horse; that Dolabella's horse, which was marching in two separate bodies towards Syria, the one in Thessaly, the other in Macedonia, had deserted their leaders, and joined themselves to him. That Vatinius had opened the gates of Dyrrachium to him, and given up the town with the troops, into his hands; that in all those transactions, Quintus Hortensius, the proconsul of Macedonia, had been particularly serviceable in disposing the provinces and their armies, to declare for the cause of liberty.*

Upon this intelligence, public honors were decreed on motion of Cicero to Brutus; and soon after he made an unsuccessful attempt to confide the conduct of the war against Dolabella to Cassius; that general, however, acted without the authority of the senate, and was soon after in a prosperous condition to further the great cause of the republic.

It is undeniable that at this time the zeal and eloquence of Cicero, proportioned to his hopes, were, in all things ardently exerted for his country. Nevertheless, though we would, in nothing, detract from the well earned merits of this illustrious Roman, which justice and good sense alike prompt us to approve, and though we readily believe that it was not a little owing to his counsels, that the republic was making a last great effort for itself, we cannot but think, that his active ardor, so long suspended, was, in a very great degree, stimulated by the double feeling of hatred and fear of Antony; nor can we reprehend this impulse, as the breach between them was now irreconcilable, and the fate of one of them was not much longer to be averted. Besides, it was Cicero's own declared opinion, that the war must necessarily decide upon his life.†

*Phil. x. 4. 5. 6.

†Ad. Brut. 2. 7.

We have his own assurance, that at this juncture, his philosophy had weakened all his disquietudes, so far as his own personal interest and safety were involved, and that he was exclusively anxious for his country. We may well suspect, nevertheless, that this great man was deceived, in supposing that his hopes of further glory had subsided; how potent soever may have been his philosophy in quieting his fears. Writing to Plancus, he observes: "The ferocity of Antony (for to call it pride, would be imputing a vice to him which is nothing uncommon,) the ferocity of his temper is so excessive, that he cannot bear a word, or even a look which is animated with the least spirit of liberty. It is this, which fills my heart with a thousand disquietudes, but disquietudes in which my own preservation is by no means concerned. No, my friend, I have nothing farther to wish with respect to myself, whether I consider the years to which I have arrived, [63,] the actions which I have performed, or the glory, if that may be mentioned as of any value in the account, with which they have been crowned: all my anxiety is for my country alone."

Although the voice of Cicero had been, from the outset, for war, it appears that about this time, acted upon by a feeling of regard for Decimus Brutus, who was in the utmost danger of his life should Antony succeed in the siege of Modena, a feeling very extensively indulged, he assented to a renewal of the negotiation, which, it has been seen, was closed by the inadmissible demands of the enemy. Dolabella had, by stratagem, seized Trebonius, one of the assassins of Cæsar; and had in revenge put him to a horrid death; and Antony was known, not only to have approved, but extolled that act. It was naturally feared, that should Brutus be subjected to his power, the fate of this general would be no less frightful, as he also was concerned in Cæsar's death. But Cicero appears to have abandoned the thought of peace, almost as soon as it was conceived. He had been chosen, among others, to conduct the negotiation, which it was proposed to carry on at the seat of war. How far a fear of so close a contact with Antony,

may have influenced the entire change in his opinion, it is not possible to say; though it is manifest from his speech that it was not overlooked in his decision. After an eloquent argument, however, dissuading all treaty, he consented to obey the public voice, and partake, though reluctantly, in the embassy.

It is difficult to believe, that the senate, after a knowledge of the views and apprehensions his argument reveals, would have further urged his participation, even had they not determined, as they did, to drop the negotiation. Denouncing the treaty with his accustomed power, he proceeds to press the reasons personal to himself, "begging them at least to spare him the pain of seeing Antony, and insisting, that though he might be able to command himself, and dissemble his uneasiness at the sight of him and his crew, yet some regard should be had to his life; not that he set any value upon it himself, but that it ought not to be thought despicable by the senate and people of Rome, since if he did not deceive himself, it was he, who by his watchings, cares and votes, had so managed matters, that all the attempts of their enemies were hitherto fruitless. That if his life had been so often attempted at home, what might he not apprehend from so long a journey: that he did not refuse the charge, but the people for him; for no man was less timorous, though none more cautious than he; that a great statesman ought to leave behind him a glory in dying, not the reproach of error and folly, and that if he should happen to escape all the snares of the road, Antony's rage was so furious, that he would never suffer him to return alive. Let my life, therefore, be reserved for the service of my country, as long as either dignity or nature will allow: let my death fall by the necessary course of fate, or if I must meet it sooner, let me meet it with glory. Since the republic, then, to speak the most moderately, has no occasion for this embassy; yet, if I can undertake it with safety, I will, and in the whole affair will govern myself entirely, fathers, not by a regard to my own dangers, but to the service of the state; and after the most mature delibe-

ration, will resolve to do that which I shall judge to be most useful to the public interests.”*

A just estimate of men has, at all times, been thought one of the most essential qualities of a statesman. Indeed it may be said to be inseparable from a really great distinction in the government of states. This quality shone with dazzling lustre in the counsels of Cicero, when counteracting the designs of Catiline; but it would seem, that in that part of his career of which we now treat, the faculty, if not lost, was in a very remarkable degree obscured; and that among the great actors of the day, his suspicions centred in Antony alone. The reader will remember, supposing him to have been sincere, with what assurance his reputation had been pawned for the probity and lasting fidelity of Octavius, and he will now discover how utterly he was deceived in the character and pretensions of Lepidus. It is true, that in this latter case, the grounds of his credulity are among the strongest.†

There can be no doubt that Lepidus, weak and vain as he was, was not without ambition; it was known that his thoughts were turned to a high rank in affairs, and we have already stated, that but for the prevailing art of Antony, he would, in all human probability, have made himself master in Rome. He now wrote to the senate, urging an accommodation, which Cicero again opposed; alledging, that fire and water would sooner unite, than the Antonies be reconciled to the republic; but he was not the less willing to decree thanks to Lepidus, for his desire of concord, or in the least doubtful of his loyalty. After inveighing against a peace, he adds, “that there was no danger to be apprehended from Lepidus, since he could not enjoy the splendor of his own fortunes, but with the safety of all honest men; that nature first makes men honest, but fortune confirms them; for though it was the common interest of all to promote the safety of the republic, yet it was more par-

* Phil. 12. x. xi.

† He complains, himself, of being perpetually duped about this time. *A. Atti. cum. xv. xxii.*

ticularly of those who were happy in their fortunes. That nobody was more so than Lepidus; and nobody, therefore, better disposed; of which the people saw a remarkable instance in the concern which he expressed when Antony offered a diadem to Cæsar, and chose to be his slave, rather than his colleague.”* Again, in a letter to Decimus Brutus: “Nor have we,” he writes, “any thing surely to apprehend from Lepidus. For who can imagine him so utterly void of all rational conduct, as to have professed himself an advocate for peace, when we were engaged in a most necessary war, and yet to take up arms against the republic, the moment that most desirable peace is restored: you are far too *sagacious* I doubt not to entertain such a thought.” This letter was written after the successes of the army, to which we shall presently refer.

Thus misled in the character and views of Lepidus, he next addresses him in a letter, which, from its import, Dr. Middleton thinks, was designed to show him that they were perfectly easy and secure at Rome, whatever measures he might think fit to take. “While out of the great respect I bear to you,” says Cicero, “I am making it my particular care to advance your dignity as much as possible, it was a concern to me to see that you did not think it worth while to return thanks to the senate, for the extraordinary honors they have conferred upon you. I rejoice, however, that you are so desirous of making peace among citizens. If you can separate that peace from slavery, you will consult both the good of the republic and your own dignity; but if the effect of it be to restore a desperate man to an arbitrary dominion, I would have you to know that all men of sense have taken a resolution to prefer death to servitude. You will act, therefore, more wisely in my judgment if you meddle no further with that affair of peace, which is not agreeable, either to the senate or the people, or to any honest man; you will hear enough of this from others, or be informed of it by letters, and will be governed by your

* Phil. 13. viii.

own prudence, as to what is best for you to do.”* We need scarcely remark that the fallacy of Cicero’s estimate, together with his error in deeming lightly of Lepidus’s power, was shown in the controlling importance of that general in the ruin of the republic.

The hopes inspired by the last despatch of Brutus from Macedonia, were now in a great degree realized. Caius Antony, who it will be recollected had been sent to act against him in that country, was now subdued and a prisoner. He had yielded in a second engagement to a force commanded by the young Cicero, who greatly signalized his valor and conduct in the progress of the war, and the armies of the republic were now in complete possession of the province.”†

There is one incident in this war, from which we may infer, that to the sterner virtues of Brutus, he did in truth, in a great degree, join the mild qualities ascribed to him, and indeed we find him, to the prejudice of his cause, and in opposition to the counsel of his friend, whose judgment he valued and desired, more than once giving way to the clemency of his nature. It is said that he “treated his prisoner with the greatest respect; nor did he divest him of the ensigns of his dignity, though he received letters from several persons at Rome, and particularly from Cicero, advising him to put him to death.”‡ And it appears that even when he found Antony practising with his officers, and corrupting his soldiers, his punishment was limited to close confinement.

We have no hesitation in thinking with Cicero, that this clemency was ill advised; and a harsher course as a retaliatory step, would have undoubtedly been sanctioned by the shocking fate of Trebonius. Brutus writes on this occasion: “Antony is still with me; but in truth I am moved with the prayers of the man. I am wholly at a loss what to do with him; am afraid lest the madness of some should make him the occasion of mischief to me. If I knew your

* Ep. Fam. x. xxvii.

† Middleton.

‡ Plutarch.

mind I should be at ease, for I should think that the best which you advised.”* Cicero replied: “It is now your part, Brutus, to consider the whole state and nature of the war: you are delighted I see with lenity, and think it the best way of proceeding; this indeed is generally right; but the proper place of clemency is in cases and seasons very different from the present; for what are we now doing Brutus? We see a needy and desperate crew threatening the very temples of the gods, and that the war must necessarily decide whether we are to live or not. Who are those whom we are sparing? or what is it that we mean? Are we consulting the safety of those who if they prevail, are sure not to leave the least remains of us? for what difference is there between Dolabella and any of the three Antonies? If we spare any of those, we have been too severe to Dolabella. It was owing chiefly to my advice and authority, that the senate and people are in this way of thinking, though the thing itself indeed obliged them to it; if you do not approve this policy, I shall defend your opinion but cannot depart from my own; the world expects from you nothing either remiss or cruel; it is easy to moderate the matter by severity to the leaders, lenity to the soldiers.”†

Again when informed of the sedition in the army, Cicero writes: “As to the sedition in the fourth legion fomented by Caius Antony, you will take what I say in good part. I am better pleased with the severity of the soldiers than yours. I am extremely glad that you have had a trial of the affections of your legions and the horse. As to what you write that I am pursuing Antony much at my ease, and praise me for it, I suppose you really think so. I do not by any means approve your distinction when you say, that our animosity ought to be excited rather in preventing civil wars than in revenging ourselves on the conquered. I differ widely with you Brutus; not that I yield to you in clemency; but a salutary severity is always preferable to a specious show of mercy. If we are so fond of pardoning,

* Ad. Brut. 2. 5.

† Ad. Brut. 2. 7.

there will be no end of civil wars; but you are to look to that, for I can say of myself with Plautus's old man in the *Trinummus*—'life is almost over with me.' It is you who are most interested in it; you will be undone Brutus believe me if you do not take care; you will not always have the people, nor the senate, nor a leader of the senate, the same as now. Take this as from the Pythian oracle; nothing can be more true." *

The following letter of Cassius will inform us of the posture of affairs with him, in the prosecution of the war against Dolabella. It is given entire, principally with a view to a complete understanding of events, and may likewise serve to pourtray the republican virtues and patriotism of its writer, as also to apprise us of the very eminent dignity and authority of Cicero at this time in Rome.

CASSIUS, pro-consul, to his friend M. T. CICERO.

"If you are in health it is a pleasure to me. I am also very well. I have read your letter in which I perceive your wonderful affection for me; for you not only wish me well, which indeed you have always done both for my own sake and the republic, but entertain an uncommon concern and solicitude for me. Wherefore as I imagined in the first place, that you would think it impossible for me to sit still and see the republic oppressed, and in the second that whenever you supposed me in action, you would be solicitous about my safety and success; so as soon as I was master of the legions which Alienus† brought from Egypt, I immediately wrote to you and sent several expresses to Rome. I wrote letters also to the senate, but forbade the delivery of them, till they had been first shown to you. If these letters have not reached you, I make no doubt but that Dolabella, who by the wicked murder of Trebonius, is master of Asia, has seized my messengers and intercepted

* Ad. Brut. 2.

† Alienus was lieutenant to Dolabella, by whom he was sent into Egypt, in order to conduct these legions into Syria; he accordingly executed his commission, but instead of delivering the troops to Dolabella, he went over with them to Cassius. *Quartier, Melmoth*, 3. 206.

them. I have all the armies which were in Syria, under my command; and having been forced to sit still awhile till I had discharged my promise to them, am now ready to take the field. I beg of you to take my honor and interests under your especial care; for you know that I have never refused any danger or labor for the service of my country; that by your advice and authority I took arms against these infamous robbers; that I have not only raised armies for the defence of the republic and our liberties, but have snatched them from the hands of the most cruel tyrants, which if Dolabella had seized before me, he would have given fresh spirits to Antony's cause, not only by the approach, but by the very fame and expectation of his troops. For which reason take my soldiers under your protection, if you think them to have deserved well of the state; and let none of them have reason to repent that they have preferred the cause of the republic to the hopes of plunder and rapine. Take care also as far as it is in your power, that due honors be paid to the emperors Murcus and Crispus; for Bassus was miserably unwilling to deliver up his legions; and if his soldiers had not sent a deputation to me, in spite of him, would have held out Apamea against me till it could be taken by force. I beg this of you not only for the sake of the republic, which of all things was ever the dearest to you, but of our friendship also, which I am confident has a great weight with you. Take my word for it, the army which I have is the senate's, and every honest man's, and above all yours; for by hearing perpetually of your good disposition, they have conceived a wonderful affection for you; and when they come to understand that you make their interests your special care, they will think themselves indebted to you for every thing. Since I wrote this I have learned that Dolabella is come into Cilicia with all his forces; I will follow him thither, and shall take care that you shall soon be informed of what I have done. I wish only that my success may be answerable to my good intentions. Continue the care of your health and your love to me."* Not

*Ep. Fam. 12, 12, vid. ib. 11.

long after this letter was written, Dolabella was shut up closely in Laodicea, where, hopeless of escape and dreading revenge for his atrocious murder of Trebonius, he had recourse to suicide, the Roman medicine in misfortune.

Meanwhile the consul Pansa had perfected the new levies, the purpose, it will be remembered, for which he remained in Rome, and had now reached the scene of war. The two armies engaged near Modena, and Cæsar was present at the battle.* Its issue was disastrous to Antony; but both the consuls were slain. The defeated general encountered in his flight the utmost distress, and indeed, extremities, than which nature knows none more afflicting. They were sustained, however, with heroic constancy; and Antony, says Plutarch, in adversity was almost a man of virtue.†

The siege of Modena, a great event in this fatal war, consumed near four months. Antony had so closely invested it, that the consuls found it almost impossible to communicate with Decimus Brutus its defender; and it is said that all manner of stratagem was resorted to, to elude his vigilance; "that Hirtius provided men skilled in diving, with letters written on lead, to pass into the town, under the river which runs through it, till Antony obstructed these passages by nets and traps under water; which gave occa-

* Plutarch.

† Cæsar. "Antony,
 Leave thy lascivious wassals. When thou once
 Was beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st
 Hirtius and Pansa consuls, at thy heel
 Did famine follow; whom thou fought'st against
 Though daintily brought up, with patience more
 Than savages could suffer. Thou didst drink
 The stale of horses, and the gilded puddle
 Which beasts would cough at; thy palate then
 Did deign the roughest berry on the rudest hedge;
 Yea like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
 The barks of trees thou browsed'st; on the Alps
 It is reported, thou didst eat strange flesh
 Which some did die to look on. And all this
 (It wounds thine honor that I speak it now,)
 Was borne so like a soldier, that thy cheek
 So much as lanked not."—*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 1. s. iv.

sion to another contrivance, by sending their intelligence backwards and forwards by pigeons." *

The intelligence of the signal success of the army near Modena, was received by the senate and people with extravagant joy, and all seemed to think that the republic was restored. The high honors bestowed upon Cicero, as we learn from his letters, were to the last degree grateful to his heart; and must, we may imagine, have vividly reminded him of his past triumphs in the far happier fortunes of his country, when for a real deliverance, he had been saluted her second founder and saviour. There can be no question of his active and constant influence in arming the state against its formidable enemy, and in every way stimulating and directing its energies for its own preservation. That the wisdom of his measures had not in all things been equal to his zeal, time too soon revealed; but the tribute to his patriotism and controlling eloquence, as in his consulship, in Rome at least was universal; though soon followed, as will be seen, by the displeasure and haughty reproach of Brutus. In the common order of events, the defeat of Antony was well calculated to strengthen if not confirm his late revived hopes; and but for the simultaneous death of the consuls, a casualty extraordinary as fatal, might have restored to the mistress of the world her republican grandeur and liberties. Its effect, however, was directly opposite; for the routed Antony flying to Lepidus,

* Middleton. Frontin. de. Stratagem. Plin. *Nat. His.* Dion. "Though you carry these birds hoodwinked sixty or a hundred miles, they will find their way in a very little time to the place where they are bred. They are trained to this service in Persia and Turkey, and carried first when young, short flights of half a mile, and afterwards more, until at length they will return from the farthest parts of the kingdom. Every Bashaw has a number of these pigeons, which upon any emergent occasion, as an insurrection or the like, he despatches with letters braced under the wings, to the seraglio, and this proves a more speedy method, as well as more safe than any other. Lithgow assures us that one of these birds will carry a letter from Babylon to Aleppo, which is thirty days' journey, in forty-eight hours. This is also a very ancient practice. Hirtius and Brutus at the siege of Modena, held a correspondence by means of pigeons; and Ovid tells us that Taurosthenes by a pigeon stained with purple, gave notice to his father of his victory at the Olympic games, sending it to him at *Ægina*." At the time we write, the merchants on the stock exchanges of London and Paris have commenced a correspondence through pigeons.

who then commanded in the further Gaul, was soon through the perfidy of that general and the attachment of his army, again a candidate for empire, and returned speedily into Italy, with seventeen entire legions of foot, and ten thousand horse.*

In a letter to the senate Lepidus implores that body to repel all doubts of his fidelity, and ascribes his own course exclusively to compulsion; calling the gods and men to witness that he had nothing so much at heart as the public safety and liberty.

LEPIDUS, Emperor and sovereign Pontiff,
To the SENATE and PEOPLE of ROME.

“Heaven and earth will bear me witness conscript fathers, that there is nothing I have at all times more sincerely desired, than the preservation of our common liberties, and I should have soon convinced you of this truth if fortune had not forced me to renounce the measures I proposed to pursue. My whole army indeed expressed their usual tenderness to their fellow countrymen by a military opposition to my designs; and to own the truth, they absolutely compelled me not to refuse my protection to such a multitude of Roman citizens. I conjure you then conscript fathers, to judge of this affair not by the suggestions of private resentment, but by the interests of the commonwealth; nor let it be imputed as a crime to me and my army, that amidst our civil dissensions we yielded to the dictates of compassion and humanity. Be assured that by acting with an equal regard to the safety and honor of all parties you will best consult both your own and your country's advantage.

From my Camp at Pons Argenteus.”

Lepidus had long been suspected of a secret understanding with Antony: we have seen with what ardor he had pressed an accommodation; and there is no doubt that his late act was the consummation of a design long since formed, to secure to himself an elevated rank in the con-

* Plutarch.

duct of affairs; foregoing the opportunity his great power presented, of interposing for the safety of his country, and preferring a share in a lawless dominion to the solid glory of a patriot; a determination, as Middleton suggests, the more extraordinary, as in the event of a restoration of the republic through his virtue, so eminent a service, added to the high dignity of his family and fortunes, could not fail to have made him the first and most cherished citizen of liberated Rome.

By the death of the consuls, Octavius was now at the head of the army, and applied himself to secure it to his interests; careless of pursuing Antony, and devising means to give effect to the great plans of aggrandizement, which we cannot doubt that he had projected at the moment he found himself in exclusive command. It is certain that no step was taken effectually to embarrass the retreat; and nothing is surer than that Cæsar showed no disposition to obstruct it. The truth is, his zeal in the late campaign, had grown more out of a desire to depress his personal enemy and rival, than from regard to the state; and when he found that Antony had so soon repaired his disasters, and was again in an imposing attitude, he appears at once to have resolved to abandon the interests of Rome, and content himself awhile with a divided empire.

Octavius is said to have been advised by Pansa on his death bed, to join with Antony in opposition to the senate, which he told him was only anxious to embroil them with each other, and then destroy them. This dying counsel is supposed to have had a powerful control in his determination, in which he was the more strengthened when Decimus Brutus was associated with him in the command, and when the honors of a triumph were denied to him. Completely to try the disposition of the senate, before his desertion, he demanded the consulship; but in this he met at first with its determined opposition. As great as was his power, there was not, says Cicero, a magistrate, or so much as a single senator, who would move for a decree for the purpose. A demand was then made through a deputation

of his officers, and their proposition being coldly received, "Cornelius, a centurion, throwing back his robe, and showing them his sword, boldly declared that if they would not make him consul, that should. But Octavius himself soon put an end to their scruples by marching with his legions in a hostile manner to the city, where he was chosen consul, with his kinsman Quintus Pædus." *

A letter of Plancus will teach us how far this treacherous boy was instrumental in the overthrow of the republic, at a moment when his fidelity might have saved it.

After stating his obligations to the elder Cæsar, and his strong desire to behold Octavius faithfully discharging his duties, Plancus proceeds: "What I am going to say is more the dictate of concern than of resentment; but it must be acknowledged that if Antony still lives; if he has been joined by Lepidus; if their armies are by no means contemptible—Cæsar is the cause. In a word, all their hopes and all their attempts are singly owing to him. Not to look further back than his promise to join me; had he fulfilled the assurances he gave me for that purpose, the war would at this time either have been totally at an end or driven into Spain, where the enemy could not have carried it on but at great disadvantage, as that province is utterly averse to them. I am at a loss to conceive, therefore, with what view, or by whose advice, Cæsar was diverted from a measure so greatly to his interest and honor, in order to turn his prospects towards a consulship of a few months' duration, much to the terror of the republic, and with pretensions too, exceedingly ridiculous." And again: "if Cæsar should comply with the dictates of his interests and honor, you have nothing to fear from this quarter, if we are speedily joined by the African legions." †

It is in our day generally believed, that the interview with, and dying counsel of Pansa, did in fact take place. If this be true, it affords additional proof of Cicero's lack of discernment in estimating the prominent actors in this decisive drama. Dr. Middleton, however, in speaking of this

* Suet. in Aug. c. 23. Middleton.

† Planc. to Cicero. Ep. Fam. x. xxiv.

matter thinks, that the story was forged afterwards, to save the honor of Octavius, and give a color to that sudden change of measures which, from the moment of the victory, he was determined to pursue; and builds his opinion upon a letter of Decimus Brutus', by which it seems that he and Cæsar had conferred, the day before Pansa's death, whereas Appian, who mentions the dying advice, asserts that Brutus refused to see Cæsar, and had in truth prevented his pursuit of Antony. There is, moreover, another letter of Brutus extant, in which he tells us that he had warmly pressed upon Cæsar the duty and necessity there was, if he were really desirous to frustrate the enemy, of crossing the Apennine. Dr. Middleton thinks further, that the death of Pansa was so sudden as scarce to leave room for the interview in question. But of this enough.

As we have before said, the general opinion was, that the war had ended in the retreat from Modena; and Marcus Brutus must, in all probability, have deemed it decisive; for we find Cicero commending his wisdom in not withdrawing his forces from Apollonia and Dyrrachium, where it appears to have been his intention to await the issue of the battle, until assured of the flight of Antony.* After that event he passed far into Greece, with a view to act against Dolabella, and could not be persuaded either by the desire of the senate, or the imploring letters of Cicero, to come into Italy, when undeceived in the high reaching views of Cæsar, and the perfidy of Lepidus, he conjured him to do so. It has been thought, and we think justly, that had Brutus and Cassius when first desired to return complied, the immediate ruin of the republic might have been averted; for Decimus Brutus was then alive, and in no inconsiderable force, whilst also up to that period the treachery of Plancus had not shown itself, and might in the view of their imposing power have been prevented, or at all events, in a great degree stripped of its importance.

**Tuum consilium vehementer laudo, quod non prius exercitum, Apollonia Dyrrachioque movisti, quam de Antonii fuga audisti, Bruti eruptione, populi Romani victoria.*—*Ad. Brut. 2.*

It is impossible to assign a motive, with any certainty, to the reluctance of Brutus to return; and from his spotless character, equally so, to impute a bad one. Lepidus was the husband of his sister, and it is not improbable that he was slow to believe him capable of the iniquitous designs with which he was charged; and, therefore, did not appreciate the urgent need of his own presence in Italy. Besides there is strong reason to think that the opinion of its expediency was by no means general.* There were many, and in all likelihood, this was his own real impression, who doubted the enduring fealty of his soldiers in the tainting atmosphere of the veterans and Cæsar, with whose principal means of power, the debauching of armies, Brutus must not be supposed to have been unapprised.

The reader will probably with us, be struck with the deeply anxious tone of the following letters.

"Fly, I beseech you, and exhort Cassius to do the same, for there is no hope of liberty but from your troops. If you have any regard for the republic for which you were born, you must do it instantly: for the war is renewed by the inconstancy of Lepidus, and Cæsar's army which was the best, is not only of no service, but even obliges us to call for yours. As soon as you ever touch Italy, there is not a man whom we can call a citizen, who will not be in your camp. We have Decimus Brutus indeed, happily united with Plan-
cus; but you are not ignorant how changeable men's minds are, how infected with party, and how uncertain are the effects of war; nay, should we conquer, as I hope we shall, there will be a want of your advice and authority to settle affairs. Help us, therefore, for the gods' sake, and as soon as possible; and assure yourself that you did not do a greater service on the ides of March, when you freed us from slavery, than you will do by coming quickly." Again, after telling Brutus that he had declared to his mother Servilia, what he took to be most for his honor, viz: that he should bring without loss of time, present help to the de-

* Middleton.

clining and tottering state, he continues, deploring the difficulty he apprehended, in redeeming his so confident pledge for the honor and fidelity of Octavius. "But the greatest grief I feel while I am now writing, is to reflect that when the republic had taken my word for a youth, or rather a boy, [*one would think that the contemptuous phrase might have been dropped,*] I shall hardly have it in my power to make good what I promised for him; for it is a thing of much greater moment and delicacy to engage oneself for another's sentiments and principles, especially in affairs of importance, than for money; for money may be paid, and the loss itself be tolerable, but how can you pay what is engaged for to the republic, unless he for whom you stand engaged will suffer it to be paid? Yet I am still in hopes to hold him, though many are plucking him away from me; for his disposition seems good, though his age be flexible, and many always at hand to corrupt him; who by throwing in his way the splendor of false honor, think themselves sure of dazzling his good sense and understanding: wherefore to all my other labors this new one is added of setting all engines at work to hold fast the young man, lest I incur the imputation of rashness. Though what rashness is it after all? for in reality, I bound him, for whom I was engaged, more strongly than myself, nor has the republic as yet any cause to repent that I was his sponsor.* Since he has hitherto been the more firm in acting for us, as well from his own temper as from my promises." And then stating that the republic found its greatest difficulty in a want of money, he reiterates his ardent desire to see Brutus in Italy.†

The letter to Cassius is also strong in entreaties to return: that commander was master of large treasure exacted in the east, and for that reason, independently of his well organized and triumphant army, his presence was desirable.

*It is one of the grounds of Cicero's desire for Brutus's return, that Cæsar was to be feared, and that his army was against them.

†Ad. Brut. x. xiv. xvlii.

CICERO TO CASSIUS.

“We wish to see you in Italy as soon as possible, and shall imagine that we have recovered the republic when we have you with us. We had conquered nobly if Lepidus had not received the routed, disarmed, fugitive Antony. Wherefore Antony himself never was so odious to the city as Lepidus is now: for he began a war upon us from a turbulent state of things; this man from peace and victory. We have the consuls elect to oppose him, in whom indeed we have great hopes; yet not without care for the uncertain event of battles. Assure yourself, therefore, that all our dependence is on you and your Brutus, and that you are both expected, but Brutus immediately.”*

* Ep. Fam. xii. x.

SECTION VI.

IN his efforts to secure the sovereign dignity, Cæsar is said, in Plutarch, to have had the countenance and assistance of Cicero, who is spoken of as suffering himself to be imposed upon, old as he was, and as having solicited the people for him, and brought the senate to his interests. We are willing very readily to believe, that he was more than once surprisingly managed by this sagacious and aspiring boy; yet there is some difficulty in giving full credit to his participation in this matter. Plutarch, it is probable, derived his authority from a perhaps questionable source, and the modern historian of Cicero produces a letter to Brutus, by which it appears that when Cæsar was first represented as desirous of the consulship, Cicero's efforts were anxious and unremitted in dissuading such a purpose. The letter, however, seems to have been written before the final action of the senate; and hence, we may not assuredly infer that his opposition was enduring, as that body did ultimately consent, and to prevent his junction with Antony clothed Octavius with a power beyond the law.

"Cæsar," says Cicero, "who has hitherto been governed by my advice, and is indeed of an excellent disposition and wonderful firmness, some people by most wicked letters and messages, and fallacious accounts, have pushed on to an assured hope of the consulship. As soon as I perceived it, I never ceased admonishing him in absence, or reproaching his friends who are present, and who seem to encourage his ambition. Nor did I scruple to lay open the source of these traitorous counsels in the senate; nor do I ever remember the senate or the magistrates to have behaved bet-

ter on any occasion; for it never happened before, that in voting an extraordinary honor to a powerful, or rather most powerful man, since power is now measured by force and arms, that no tribune or any other magistrate, nor so much as a private senator would move for it; yet in the midst of all this firmness and virtue, the city is greatly alarmed; for we are abused, Brutus, by the licentiousness of the soldiers, and the insolence of the general. Every one demands to have as much power in the state as he has means to extort it: no reason, no moderation, no law, no custom, no duty, is at all regarded; no judgment, no opinion of the citizens, no shame of posterity.”*

Plutarch's story is, that Octavius, when he found the senate disposed to pursue vigorous measures, entreated Cicero to procure the consulship for them both; promising that he would be ruled in the administration exclusively by his counsels, as he desired nothing but the honor; and states that Cæsar afterwards acknowledged that he had seasonably availed himself of Cicero's ambition; persuading him to stand for the consulship. We have given above, the letter on which the apologist of the orator has relied, in confutation of this charge. If genuine, and if stating the truth, it certainly goes far to relieve Cicero from this great stain; but by some it is thought to be spurious, and others are not disposed to yield to it implicit belief, against the testimony of Plutarch, Dion Cassius and Appian, who all agree in this matter; the rather, they say, as there is ample evidence of Cicero's want of rigid adherence to the truth. Mr. Melmoth thinks that there is strong reason to doubt the authenticity or veracity of the letter, and clearly shows that Cicero, if his philippics may be credited, did actually favor the earliest possible promotion of Octavius to the consulate. “*Quid est enim patres conscripti, cur eum (Octavianum) non quam primum amplissimos honores capere cupimus? Legibus, enim analibus, cum grandiore ætatem ad consulatum constituebant, adoloescentiæ temeritatem verebantur. Cæsar ineunte ætate, docuit ab eccellente exi-*

* Ad. Brut, x.

miaque virtute progressum ætatis expectari non oportere. In hoc, spes libertatis posita est; ab hoc accepta jam salus, huic summi honores, et exquiruntur et parati sunt."*

These sentiments are beyond doubt irreconcilably at war with the letter to Brutus, and give great strength to the views of Melmoth, who thinks it probable that Plutarch took this piece of secret history from those memoirs, which Octavius wrote of his own life; as it is certain that both that Greek and Appian made great use of them in compiling their histories. If, however, we entertain a doubt in this matter unfriendly to the fame of Cicero, we have built it upon the view we have taken of his character, his well known readiness in squandering honors, often prejudicial, and upon his own sentiments as above revealed; rather than assertions of Cæsar, who must not be imagined to have been solicitous over much, to brighten the reputation of a man whom, with an excess of meanest perfidy, he had betrayed.

But if we acquit Cicero of this last dishonorable subserviency to the destroyer of the republic, it cannot be disguised that he had been, if not the parent, at least the cherisher of his now irresistible power. We have already seen that it was at his suggestion a command was conferred upon Octavius, and that he should enjoy the rights of a proprætor, as also the dignity of the senate. It is moreover true, that on the defeat of Antony, in the distribution of honors to the commanders, the young general shared profusely, and not against, but in compliance with Cicero's desire. The title of imperator was bestowed, and an ovation† decreed. These we may well suppose to have been ample; yet it seems that there were not wanting senators who thought even this profusion niggard, and were desirous if possible to enlarge it.

We shall hereafter speak of Cicero's course at this fatal juncture, and in the meantime enable the reader in the following letters to see the grounds upon which he was

* Phil. 5. xvii. xviii.

† The lesser triumph.

subjected to the gravest charges, as also to estimate the justice of the truly Roman rebuke of Brutus.

CICERO to BRUTUS.

“You have now Messala with you. It is not possible, therefore, for me to explain by letter, though ever so accurately drawn, the present state of our affairs so exactly as he, who not only knows them all more perfectly, but can describe them more elegantly than any man; for I would not have you imagine Brutus, (though there is no occasion to tell you what you know already yourself, but that I cannot pass over in silence, such an excellence of all good qualities :) I would not have you imagine, I say, that for probity, constancy, and zeal for the republic, there is any one equal to him; so that eloquence, in which he wonderfully excels, scarce finds a place among his other praises; since even in that, his wisdom shines the most eminent, by his having formed himself with so much judgment and skill to the truest manner of speaking. Yet his industry is all the while so remarkable, and he spends so much of his time in study that he seems to owe little to his parts, which are still the greatest. But I am carried too far by my love of him; for it is not the purpose of this epistle to praise Messala, especially to Brutus, to whom his virtue is not less known than to myself; and these very studies which I am praising, still more; whom when I could not part with without regret, I comforted myself with reflecting that by his going away to you, as it were to my second self, he both discharged his duty, and pursued the surest way to glory. But so much for that. I come now, after a long interval, to consider a certain letter of yours, in which, while you allow me to have done well in many things, you find fault with me for one: that in conferring honors I was too free, and even prodigal. You charge me with this; others probably in being too severe in punishing, or you yourself perhaps in both. If so, I desire that my judgment and sentiments in each, may be clearly explained to you; not that I mean to justify myself by the authority of

Solon, the wisest of the seven, and the only legislator of them all, who used to say that the public weal was comprised in two things, rewards and punishments; in which however, as in every thing else, a certain medium and temperament is to be observed. But it is not my design at this time to discuss so great a question. I think it proper only to open the reasons of my votes and opinions in the senate from the beginning of this war. After the death of Cæsar, and those your memorable ides of March, you cannot forget Brütus what I declared to have been omitted by you, and what a tempest I foresaw hanging over the republic. You had freed us from a great plague; wiped off a great stain from the Roman people; acquired to yourselves divine glory; yet all the equipage and furniture of kingly power were left still to Lepidus and Antony; the one inconstant and the other vicious; both of them afraid of peace, and enemies of the public quiet. While these men were eager to raise fresh disturbances, we had no guard about us to oppose them; though the whole city was eager and unanimous in asserting its liberty: I was then thought too violent; whilst you, perhaps more wisely, withdrew yourself from that city which you had delivered, and refused the help of Italy, which offered to arm itself in your cause. Whereupon, when I saw the city in the hands of traitors, oppressed by the arms of Antony, and that neither you nor Cassius could be safe in it, I thought it time for me to quit it too; for a city overpowered by traitors is a wretched spectacle. Yet love of my country would not bear the thought of leaving it in distress; in the midst therefore of my voyage to Greece, and in the very season of the Etesian winds, when an uncommon south wind, as if displeased with my resolution, had driven me back to Italy, I found you at Velia, and was greatly concerned at it; you were retreating Brutus, I say were retreating, since your stoicks will not allow their wise men to fly. As soon as I came to Rome, I exposed myself to the wickedness and rage of Antony, and when I had exasperated him against me, began to enter into measures in the very manner of the Brutus's,

(for such are peculiar to your blood for delivering the republic.) I shall omit the long recital of what follows, since it all relates to myself; and observe only that young Cæsar, by whom if we will confess the truth, we subsist at this day, *flowed from the source of my counsels*. I decreed him no honors Brutus, but what were due; none but what were necessary; for as soon as we began to recover any liberty, and before the virtue of Decimus Brutus had shown itself so far that we could know its divine force, and while our whole defence was in the boy, who repelled Antony from our necks, what honor was not really due to him? though I gave him nothing but the praise of words,* and that but moderate. I decreed him indeed a legal command, which though it seemed honorable to one of that age, was yet necessary to one who had an army; for what is an army without the command of it? Philip voted him a statue; Servius, the privilege of suing for offices before the legal time, which was shortened still by Servilius; nothing was then thought too much; but we are apt, I know not how, to be more liberal in fear, than grateful in success. When Decimus Brutus was delivered from the siege, a day of all others most joyous to the city, which happened also to be his birth day, I decreed that his name should be forever ascribed to that day in the public calendars. In which I followed the example of our ancestors who paid the same honor to a woman, Larentia, at whose altar your priests perform sacred rites in the Velabrum; by giving this to Decimus Brutus, my design was to fix in the calendars a perpetual memorial of a most acceptable victory; but I perceived on that day that there was more malevolence than gratitude in many of the senate. During these same days I poured out honors, since you will have it so, on the deceased Pansa, Hirtius, and Aquila; and who can find fault with it but those who, when fear is over, forget their past dangers? But besides the grateful remembrance of services, there was an use in it which reached to posterity;

* See extract from Philippic page 137.

for I was desirous that there should remain an eternal monument of the public hatred to our most cruel enemy. There is one thing I doubt which does not please you, for it does not please your friends here, who though excellent men, have yet but little experience in public affairs; that I decreed an ovation to Cæsar, but for my part, (though I may be mistaken, for I am not one of those who approve nothing but what is my own,) I cannot but think that I have advised nothing more prudent during this war. Why it is so, it is not proper to be explained, lest I be thought to have been more provident in it than grateful; but even this is too much; let us pass, therefore, to other things. I decreed honors to Decimus Brutus, decreed them to Plancus; they must be men of great souls who are attracted by glory; but the senate also, is certainly wise in trying every art that is honest, by which it can engage any one to the service of the republic. But I am blamed in the case of Lepidus, to whom after I had raised a statue in the rostra, I presently threw it down. My view in that honor was to reclaim him from desperate measures; but the madness of an inconstant man got the better of my prudence; nor was there yet so much harm in erecting, as good in demolishing, the statue. But I have said enough about honors, and must say a word or two about punishments; for as I have often observed from your letters, that you are fond of acquiring a reputation for clemency, by your treatment of those whom you have conquered in war, I can imagine nothing to be done by you, but what is wisely done, but to omit the punishment of wickedness, (which we call pardoning) though it be pardonable in other cases, I hold it to be pernicious in this war. Of all the civil wars that have been in my memory, there was not one in which, what side soever got the better, there would not have remained some form of a commonwealth; yet in this what sort of a republic we are like to have if we conquer, I would not easily affirm; but if we are conquered, we are sure to have none. My votes, therefore, were severe against Antony, severe against Lepidus, not from any spirit of revenge, but to

SKETCH OF THE

r wicked citizens from making war against their country, and to leave an example to posterity that none hereafter should imitate such rashness; yet this very vote was not more mine than it was every body's; in which there seems I own to be something cruel that the punishment should reach to children who have done nothing to deserve it; but the constitution is both ancient and of all cities; for even Themistocles' children were reduced to want; and since the same punishment falls upon citizens condemned of public crimes, how was it possible for us to be more gentle to enemies. But how can that man complain of me, who if he had conquered must needs confess that he would have treated me with more severity. You have now the motives of my opinion in the case of rewards and punishments; for as to other points, you have heard, I imagine, what my sentiments and votes have been. But to talk of these things now is not necessary. What I am going to say is extremely so Brutus. We are in the utmost expectation of you. Whenever you set foot in Italy all the world will fly to you; come to Italy with your army as soon as possible; for whether it be our lot to conquer, (as we had already done if Lepidus had not been desirous to overturn all and perish himself with his friends,) there will be a great want of your authority for the settling some state of a city among us; or if there be any danger and struggle still behind hasten to us for god's sake, for you know how much depends upon opportunity, how much on despatch. What diligence I shall use in the care of your sister's children, you will soon know I hope from your mother's and sister's letters, in whose cause I have more regard to your will, which is ever most dear to me, than as some think to my own constancy; but it is my desire both to be and to appear constant in nothing so much as loving you."*

BRUTUS to CICERO.

"I have read a part of your letter which you sent to

Octavius, transmitted to me by Atticus. Your zeal and concern for my safety, gave me no new pleasure; for it is not only common, but our daily news, to hear something which you have said or done with your usual fidelity, in support of my honor, or dignity. Yet that same part of your letter affected me with the most sensible grief which my mind could possibly receive; for you compliment him so highly for his services to the republic, and in a strain so suppliant and abject, that what shall I say?—I am ashamed of the wretched state to which we are reduced—yet it must be said—you recommend my safety to him, to which what death is not preferable? and plainly show that our servitude is not yet abolished, but our master only changed. Recollect your words, and deny them if you dare, to be the prayers of a slave to his king. There is one thing you say which is required and expected of him, that he would allow those citizens to live in safety, of whom all honest men and the people of Rome think well. But if he will not allow it, shall we be the less safe for that. It is better not to be safe, than to be saved by him. For my own part I can never think all the gods so adverse to the preservation of the Roman people, that Octavius must be entreated for the life of any one citizen, much less for the deliverers of the world. It is a pleasure for me to talk thus magnificently, and even becomes me to those who know not either what to fear for any one, or what to ask for any one. Can you allow Octavius to have this power, and yet be his friend? Or if you have any value for me, could you wish to see me at Rome, when I must first be recommended to the boy, that he would permit me to be there? what reason have you to thank him, if you think it necessary to beg of him, that he would grant and suffer us to live in safety? or is it to be reckoned a kindness that he chooses to see himself rather than Antony, in a condition to have such petitions addressed to him. One may supplicate indeed the successor, but never the abolisher, of tyranny, that those who have well deserved of the republic may be safe. It was this weakness and despair, not more blameable indeed

in you than in all, which first pushed Cæsar to the ambition of reigning, and after his death encouraged Antony to think of seizing his place, and has now raised this boy so high, that you think it necessary to address your prayers for the preservation of men of our rank; and that we be saved only by the mercy of one scarce yet a man, and by no other means. But if we had remembered ourselves to be Romans, those infamous men would not be more daring to aim at dominion, than we to repel it; nor would Antony be more encouraged by Cæsar's reign than deterred by his fate. How can you, a consular senator and the avenger of so many treasons (by suppressing which you have but postponed our ruin I fear for a time,) reflect on what you have done, and yet approve these things, or bear them so tamely as to seem at least to approve them? For what particular grudge had you to Antony? No other but that he assumed all this to himself; that our lives should be begged of him; our safety be precarious, from whom he had received his liberty; and the republic depend upon his will and pleasure. You thought it necessary to take arms to prevent him from tyrannizing at this rate; but was it your intent in preventing him, we might sue to another who would suffer himself to be advanced in his place; or that the republic might be free and mistress of itself; as if our quarrels were not perhaps to slavery but the conditions of it. But we might have had not only an easy master in Antony, if we would have been content with that, but whatever share we pleased in favors and honors. For what could he deny to those whose patience he saw was the best support to his government, but nothing was of such value to us, as that we should sell our faith and liberty for it. This very boy whom the name of Cæsar seems to incite against the destroyers of Cæsar, at what rate would he value it, if there was any room to traffic with him, to be enabled by our help, to maintain his present power, since we have a mind to live and be rich, and be called consulars? But then Cæsar must have perished in vain; for what reason had we to rejoice at his death, if after it we were to continue slaves? Let

other people be as indolent as they please, but may the gods and goddesses deprive me sooner of every thing than the resolution not to allow to the heir of him I killed, what I did not allow to the man himself; nor would suffer even in my father were he living, to have more power than the laws and the senate. How can you imagine that any one can be free under him without whose leave there is no place for us in that city? or how is it possible to obtain, after all, what you ask? You ask that he would allow us to be safe; shall we then receive safety, think you, when we receive life? But how can we receive it when we first part with our honor and liberty? Do you fancy that to live at Rome is to be safe? It is the thing, and not the place, that must secure that to me; for I was never safe while Cæsar lived, till I had resolved on that attempt; nor can I in any place live in exile as long as I hate slavery and affronts above all other evils. Is not this to fall back again to the same state of darkness, when he who has taken upon him the name of the tyrant (though in the cities of Greece, when the tyrants are destroyed, their children also perish with them,) must be entreated that the avengers of tyranny should be safe? Can I ever wish to see that city which would not accept liberty when offered, and even forced upon her, but has more dread of the name of the late king in the person of a boy, than confidence in herself; though it has seen that very king taken off in the height of his power, by the virtue of a few. As for me, do not recommend me any more to your Cæsar, nor indeed yourself, if you will hearken to me. You set a very high value on the few years which remain to you at that age, if for the sake of them you can supplicate that boy. But take care, after all, lest what you have done and are doing so laudably against Antony, instead of being praised as the effect of a great mind, be not charged to the account of your fear. For if you are so pleased with Octavius as to petition him for our safety, you will be thought not to have disliked a master, but to have wanted a more friendly one. As for your praising him for the things he has hitherto done, I entirely approve of it; for they deserved to

be praised, provided that he undertook them to repel other men's power, not to advance his own. But when you adjudge him not only to have this power, but that you ought to submit to it so far as to entreat him that he would not destroy us, you pay him too great a recompense; for you ascribe that very thing to him which the republic seemed to enjoy through him; nor does it ever enter into your thoughts that if Octavius be worthy of any honors because he wages war with Antony, that those who extirpated the very evil of which they are but the relics, can never be sufficiently requited by the Roman people; though they were to heap upon them every thing they could bestow. But see how much stronger people's fears are than their memories, because Antony still lives and is in arms. As to Cæsar, all that could and ought to be done, is passed, and cannot be recalled. Is Octavius a person of so great importance that the people of Rome are to expect from him what he will determine upon us? or are we of so little, that any single man is to be entreated for our safety? As for me, may I never return to you, if ever I either supplicate any man, or do not restrain those who are disposed to do so, from supplicating for themselves, or I will remain at a distance from all such as can be slaves, and fancy myself at Rome, wherever I can live free; and shall pity you, whose fond desire of life, neither age, nor honors, nor the example of other men's virtue, can moderate. For my part, I shall ever think myself happy as long as I can please myself with the persuasion, that my piety has been fully requited. For what can be happier for a man conscious of virtuous actions, and content with liberty, to despise all human affairs. Yet I will never yield to those who are fond of yielding, or be conquered by those who are willing to be conquered; but will first attempt every thing, nor ever desist from dragging our city out of slavery. If such fortune attend me as I ought to have, we shall all rejoice, if not, I shall rejoice myself; for how could this life be better spent than in acts and thoughts which tend to make my country free? I beg and beseech you, Cicero, not to desert the cause through

weariness or diffidence; in repelling present evils, have your eye always on the future, lest they insinuate themselves before you are aware; consider that the fortitude and courage with which you delivered the republic when consul, and now again when consular, are nothing without constancy and equality. The case of tried virtue is harder than that of untried; we require services from it as debts, and if any thing disappoints us, we blame with resentment as if we had been deceived. Wherefore, for Cicero to withstand Antony, though it may be a part highly commendable; yet because such a consul seemed of course to promise us such a consular, nobody wondered at it; but if the same Cicero in the case of others, should waver at last in that resolution which he exerted with such firmness and greatness of mind against Antony, he would deprive himself not only of the hopes of future glory, but forfeit that which is past; for nothing is great in itself but what flows from the result of our judgment; nor does it become any man more than you, to love the republic, and be the patron of liberty, on the account either of your natural talents, or your former acts, or the wishes and expectations of all men. Octavius, therefore, must not be entreated to suffer us to live in safety. Do you rather rouse yourself so far, as to think that city in which you have acted the noblest part, free and flourishing as long as there are leaders still to the people, to resist the designs of tyrants.”*

Before presenting these letters, Middleton, who seems to have been determined, if possible, to rescue Cicero from any the least reproach, and this too in spite of powerful evidence produced on most occasions by himself with commendable fairness, indulges in a contrast of the respective writers, and how exalted soever as we have been taught to

* Ad. Brut. xvi. There is a letter of Brutus, from which it has been inferred that Cicero had called Casca an assassin, which was one of the strong grounds of his displeasure. Dr. Middleton thinks the truth of this highly improbable, and argues that such an assertion is totally irreconcilable with the whole course of Cicero from the time of Cæsar's death; and is confirmed in his opinion by the fact to which we have referred, that he made it a condition of his friendship to Octavius, that he would not obstruct Casca's admission to the tribunate to which he had been named by his victim.

regard it, was the character of Brutus, the orator, as usual, escapes triumphantly. The patriot is represented as animated by a spirit far less noble than that of his immortal ancestor, and charged with the grossest inconsistency; his manners are arraigned as not only uncourtly, but to no common extent arrogant and churlish, and his very clemency denounced as effeminate, and as a departure from the rigid stoicism he boasted; whilst the course of Cicero from the moment of Cæsar's death, is extolled as disinterested, devoted, and in every way glorious. In considering the justice of the reproaches to which the latter was at this period subjected, we have little or nothing to do with the imputed degeneracy or ill-timed clemency of Brutus; and with regard to the courtesy of the parties in this contrast, the reader can have no difficulty in awarding the palm. But, charming as is politeness in this world of our's, and though one must needs partake somewhat of the brute to wound without provocation the feelings of his fellow, yet there are crises where courtesy would be crime, and even the harshest reproach an imperious demand of justice; nor can we imagine rebuke more righteous than that of a patriot, after a deed of blood, at which, but for the very highest of human purposes, his mild nature would have shuddered, checked in the midst of his fervent aspirations, in a quarter where patriotism altogether disinterested had been confidently hoped for, and where wisdom and eloquence of the first order were known to reside.

Octavianus, after he had moulded the senate to his will, and obtained from it a power beyond the law, revealed at once his real designs, and left Rome immediately to mature with Antony and Lepidus the plan which had been before concerted: the formation of a league than which the history of mankind presents none more flagitious, or more coldly ambitious.* It was an union of men each hating the other,

* We might, perhaps with propriety, have excepted in the text that vilest atrocity of modern kingship—the league dismembering Poland. By the way is it not strange to say no worse, that France and England, professed champions of human rights, and officiously meddling every day in the peninsula and elsewhere, avowedly with a view to the growth of free principles, should have so coldly regarded the accumu-

and each aspiring to dominion, but content to admit a partner in power, until the friends of liberty and the republic, their common enemies, might be crushed.* Their mutual distrust is seen in the extraordinary means of security resorted to preparatory to their meeting. A small river island of the Rhine was the scene of this impious alliance, and in sight of it each had placed a body of his choicest soldiers. Lepidus was the first to enter the island, and seeing no marks of treachery, a signal of approach was made, when Cæsar opened the conference with an expression of thanks to Antony for his zeal in the destruction of Decimus Brutus, to whom the senate had not long before entrusted a part of his command, and who when deserted by Plancus had fled into Macedonia, where after varied distress he was finally slain by the soldiers of Antony, who conveyed his head to their commander.† Three days were then consumed in the adjustment of powers. Among the three, there was to be a joint supreme rule for five years, with the lying title of "*triumvirs, to settle the state of the republic;*" all magistrates at home and abroad were to be chosen by their joint act; and, in short, every thing was subjected to their sovereign pleasure.

In the territorial arrangement, Octavius was to govern Africa with Sicily, Sardinia, and the other isles of the Medi-

lated wrongs and dauntless valor of the Poles. Perhaps the "mangled" Poland lacked a key to their commercial sympathies. God grant, at all events, that with buoyancy and energies unhelped, if it must be so, she may yet rise in vengeance and baffle the despot who is grinding her with a power begun in robbery and sustained by outrage.

* Middleton.

† It will be recollected with what constancy Decimus Brutus had maintained his hold upon Modena: he was one of the conspirators, and was master at the commencement of the war of a large fortune, which was cheerfully devoted to the service of the republic. Indeed it would seem from a letter to Cicero, that his zeal had completely impoverished him. His fate was a melancholy one, and was preceded by distresses of a nature to remind us of the sufferings of Prince Charles Edward when wandering in Scotland. An attempt has been made by the old writers, to fix a stain upon the name of Brutus, who, they would have us believe, displayed the utmost pusillanimity when taken. It is however well thought, that this attempt sprung from a desire to blacken all, in any way instrumental to the death of Cæsar; and it certainly finds no support in that part of his conduct to which these pages have incidentally referred. He was of the famous race of the Bruti, and was at the beginning of the war worth one million and a half of dollars, and when he wrote to Cicero, was maintaining seven legions at his own expense.

terranean; Lepidus, Spain, with the Narbonese Gaul; and Antony the other two Gauls on both sides of the Alps. Finally, Cæsar was to resign the consulship, and Lepidus, with a number of legions guard the city, whilst his associates should prosecute the war against the republican armies under Brutus and Cassius; and it was determined that at the close of the war, the fairest cities and colonies of Italy should be wrested from their peaceful owners, and given in recompense to the soldiers. The armies hailed the league with rapture, and it was cemented by the marriage of Octavius with Claudia, Antony's daughter-in-law.

"Having thus," as Plutarch says, "divided the empire as a paternal inheritance," and fixed the limit of the rule of each, there followed next a relentless proscription. In this, it is pretended, that there were warm disputes among them; that in the breast of Octavius at least, the common feelings of humanity were allowed to operate, and that he was ardent in his desire to save the prince of their victims, Cicero: withholding his assent to this sacrifice for two days, till finally overpowered by his colleagues: the one devoting a brother, the other an uncle. This has been strongly denied; and the tenderness of the young man is said to have been altogether artificial, to give a better color to his ingratitude.* For ourselves, we can easily imagine either course on the part of Octavius, by no means wonderful; for though in the outset of his splendid life he may have thought it wise to feign the highest veneration for the character of Cicero, and to beseech his countenance and aid in the laudable and other purposes he at first avowed; he might, in truth, have regarded him with hate, as the friend of Brutus, and uniform panegyrist of that act by which his father fell, and may have looked upon his immolation in the light of filial piety, or he may have in sincerity been animated by feelings of regard for Cicero, and had certainly no very recent proof of his unconquerable aversion, as an apostle of liberty, to his own aggrandizement.

We may discern the spirit of this flagitious league in its

* Middleton.

description by Plutarch. "I believe," says he, "there was never any thing so atrocious or so execrably savage, as this commerce of murder; for while a friend was given up for an enemy received, the same action murdered at once the friend and the enemy, and the destruction of the former was still more horrible, because it had not even resentment for its apology."

If we review the course of Antony and Octavius from the moment of Cæsar's death, and the arrival of the latter from Macedonia, though the turpitude of both be manifest, we cannot but concede that in the conception and prosecution of their plans, there was a display of eminent talents and equal address; accompanied in the one with valor and constancy, and with adequate firmness in the other. We have seen with what skill, at a moment when his own doubts and fears were yet unquieted, Antony had won the inconstant Lepidus to his will; employing him at home, until his presence in Italy was no longer needful, and then despatching him into Gaul, as a resource in the event of disaster.* We next beheld him stimulating by his eloquence the passions of the Romans, and prompting them to revenge the murder of the man who had enslaved them: forcing from the city his greatest enemy Cicero, and with him the deliverers of their country; in the field and in misfortune, commanding applause, by his valor in the one, and heroic fortitude in the other; retreating upon means which, in the outset, his sagacity had provided; and ultimately reaching vast dominion; whilst on the other hand is seen Octavius, a child, winning with consummate art the co-operation and assured pledges of the great republican statesman of the day; debauching with money and the charm of his name, the veteran soldiers in Italy; driving thence a most formidable rival; securing the command of the armies on the death of the consuls; and at last in a triple league, fixing the basis of an imperial power.

The fate of Lepidus, the puppet of them both, though far from adequate to his crimes, was well suited to his stupid

* Middleton.

ambition. Octavianus soon corrupted his troops; and though he suppliantly threw himself upon his knees, he was stripped of all power and banished to Circeii,

Spoliata quam tueri non poterat dignitas.—*Vel. Pat.* 2. 8.*

The proscription in which the great orator and republican perished, embraced, we are told, three hundred senators and two thousand knights; and it is also said that the resentment and avarice of the triumvirs were extended to the softer sex. It was proposed to select from the women of the highest quality in Rome, fourteen hundred of the richest, who were to render an account of their wealth, and to be taxed in proportion. But here the ladies were saved, in some degree, from the rapine of their rulers, by the determined eloquence of one of their own body. Hortensia, the daughter of the orator whose renown had given so great an impulse to the efforts of Cicero, was undaunted in her opposition to a measure, as offensive to gallantry as to justice, and prevailed so far as to lessen the number of the proscribed fair, to four hundred. Whereupon an indemnity was sought in an extension of the tax upon men; and it is said that one hundred thousand, as well strangers as citizens, were compelled to accelerate the total ruin of the freedom of Rome.†

It was the design of the triumvirs, when their alliance was consummated, to conceal as far as possible their black

* We may here, without apology, again refer to the mighty dramatist. He seems to have had just views of Lepidus, and has in his tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra, with some drollery, told us his attitude with his colleagues.

Lepidus. What manner o'thing is your crocodile?

Antony. It is shaped, sir, like itself; and it is as broad
As it has breadth; it is just so high as it is, and
Moves with its own organs; it lives by that which
Nourisheth it; and the elements once out of it, it
Transmigrates.

Lepidus. What color is it of?

Antony. Of its own color, too.

Lepidus. 'Tis a strange serpent.

Antony. 'Tis so, and the tears of it are wet.

Cæsar. Will this description satisfy him.

Antony. Else he is a very epicure.

† Appian has preserved the discourse which Hortensia pronounced. At the head of her companions she dared to plead their cause before the triumvirs, where men bending under oppression durst not raise their eyes or open their mouths.—*D'Arnay.*

determination to seek so broad revenge in the death of the republicans; and the doom which was at first promulged, was limited in all to a list of about seventeen of the most prominent victims; at the head of which was Cicero. To murder these, agents were despatched at once; but the intentions of the triumvirs not being known, the consternation of the citizens on the arrival of the executioners was inexpressible. The consul Pædius, to appease their fears, assured them that the proscription was limited; but his own horror had been such as to have destroyed him: his death was almost immediate.*

We are told that when the intelligence of his doom reached Cicero, he was with his brother Quintus at his Tusculan villa, and that his first determination was to proceed to Astura, one of his country seats near the sea, whence he designed to sail into Macedonia to Brutus, who was reported to be in great power. His brother and he, the same writer† adds, were both oppressed with sorrow and despair; and Quintus the more so, as he was in want of necessaries, having brought nothing with him from home. It was therefore concluded that Cicero, who was himself but slenderly provided, should hasten at once to the sea, whilst Quintus should return to his house to supply himself. The latter, with his son, was soon betrayed and slain.

Cicero embarked; but the winds not proving fair, he soon landed at Circeii, where, Dr. Middleton informs us, he passed a night of great anxiety and irresolution; and on the authority of Seneca adds, that the question there was, whether he should fly to Brutus or to Cassius, or to S. Pompeius: but that death, on deliberation, was most pleasing to him.‡ In the midst of this perplexity, he is said to have contemplated self-murder in the house of Cæsar, as an invocation to the divine vengeance upon his betrayer; a determination which in his contrast of Demosthenes and Cicero, Plutarch would seem to have approved, but from which this author adds he

* Plut. in Ant. et Cic. Appian. Dio p. 326. Vel. Pat. 2. 6. 5.

† Plutarch.

‡ Cremutius Cordus ait, Ciceroni cum cogitasset, numme Brutum an Cassium an Sextum Pompeium peteret omnia displicuisse præter mortem. Senec. Suasor. 6.

was deterred through fear of torture. Carried at last to Cajeta, weary of his life and the sea, he seems to have found a proud consolation in the power still left him to die in the country he had saved.*

If we credit the old writers, we must believe that on the approaching fate of this illustrious man, a part of the brute species itself, seemed conscious of his peril, and that no effort of native rhetoric was spared to avert it. One of them says that "there was a temple of Apollo on the coast, from which a flight of crows came with great noise towards Cicero's vessel as it was making the land. They perched on both sides of the sail yard, where some sat croaking, and pecking the ends of the ropes; all looked upon this as an ill omen, yet Cicero went on shore, and entering his house lay down to repose himself. In the mean time a number of the crows settled upon the chamber window, and croaked in the most doleful manner. One of them even entered, and alighting upon the bed, attempted with its beak to draw off the clothes with which he had covered his face. On sight of this the servants began to reproach themselves. Shall we, said they, remain to be spectators of our master's murder? Shall we not protect him, so innocent and so great a sufferer as he is, when the brute creatures give him marks of their care and attention? Then partly by entreaty, and partly by force, they got him into a litter and carried him towards the sea."†

Whilst on the way to the shore, the soldiers came up, broke open the doors, and commenced a search for Cicero; his servants denying that they knew any thing of him. It was said by some, from whom Plutarch professes to have taken the account, that the assassins were directed to the litter by Philologus, a freedman of Quintus. Tiro, however, was silent as to this imputed treachery, and the story, therefore, is probably unfounded.‡ Besides, Philologus had

* *Tædium tandem eum et fugæ et vitæ cæpit: regressusque ad superiorem villam, quæ paulo plus mille passibus a mari abest, Moriar, inquit, in patria sæpe servata.—Liv. Frag. apud Senec. Suasor. 1. vid. Plut. in Cic.*

† Plutarch in Cic.

‡ Tiro wrote a life of Cicero, and a number of treatises, all of which are lost.

been instructed by Cicero in the liberal arts and sciences, and partook, in all likelihood, of the strong affection of the slaves. Popilius Lænas, who commanded the party, and who took an active part in the murder, was also greatly bound to him, and had, in fact, been successfully defended by him in a charge of parricide. It is said that the slaves, if left to themselves, would have defended their master to the last; but that he himself commanded them, when the party came up, to put down the litter, and forego all attempt to save him.* “He then put his left hand to his chin, as was his custom, and looked steadfastly upon his murderers; the expression of misery in his face, overgrown with hair and wasted with anxiety, so much affected the attendants of the officer, that they covered their faces during this melancholy scene.”† Stretching his neck from the litter, he bade them take what they desired. His head and hands were severed from his body, and in obedience to an infernal impulse of revenge, placed by Antony’s order in the Rostra; the scene of his multiplied triumphs and mighty efforts for the commonwealth.‡”

*Satis constat, servos fortiter fideliterque paratos fuisse ad dimicandum: ipsum deponi lecticam, et quietos pati, quod sors iniqua cogeret, jussisse.—*Liv. Frag. apud Senec. Suasor.*

† Plutarch.

‡ Cicero was killed on the seventh of December, about ten days from the settlement of the triumvirate, after he had lived sixty-three years, eleven months, and five days.—*Middleton.*

SECTION VII.

BEFORE we come to descant upon the qualities of the father, we will here with a view to vindicate his claim to a milder esteem of posterity, devote a few pages to Cicero, the son. In their estimate of his character, the older writers seem to have completely overlooked that equitable rule by which the historian is taught, when inflexibly declaring and denouncing the vices of an individual, to yield at the same time deserved tribute to his virtues. A like error has prevailed in our day, and it is now generally believed that the young man was in truth, as represented, stupid and vicious, and in every way degenerate.* That he was in the early part of his life any thing but stupid, is clear from the important trusts confided to him, both by Pompey and Brutus; the latter being warm and constant in his praise, and describing him as of singular industry, and adequate skill as a commander.† It is certain too, that so far from the degeneracy imputed to him, he was in the high feeling of patriotism at least, not only not inferior to his father, but far more inflexible than he in that virtue. We find him challenging applause for his uncompromising hate to tyranny, and fighting bravely, and with distinction, in the republican armies, from the commencement of the civil war till freedom breathed her latest sigh in Sicily; a

* *Ciceronem filium quæ res consulem fecit, nisi pater? Seneca de Benefic, 4, 30. Nam virtutes omnes aberant; stupor et vitia aderunt. Lipsii. Not. ad locum.*

† "Your son," writes Brutus, "recommends himself to me so effectually by his industry, patience, activity, greatness of mind, and in short by every duty, that he seems never to drop the remembrance of whose son he is: wherefore since it is not possible for me to make you love him more than you do already, yet — thus much to my judgment, as to persuade yourself that he will have no occasion to borrow any share of your glory, in order to obtain his father's honors.

Kal. Apr. ad Brut. &c.

constancy, for which, if the truth be told, the sire was not distinguished; for we have seen him deserting the cause of his country at a moment when many of its illustrious friends did not despair, but were on the contrary in a prosperous condition in arms.

With regard to the conduct of the son at Athens, where he ingenuously admits that he had been truant to himself, we may learn from the following letters, that he had not in vain seen the folly of his course. There is in the first of them a tone of sincerity which cannot be withstood. "I came hither," says Trebonius, "on the first of May, where I saw your son, and saw him to my great joy pursuing every thing that was good and in the highest credit for the modesty of his behaviour. Do not imagine my Cicero, that I say this to flatter you, for nothing can be more beloved than your young man is, by all who are at Athens, nor more studious of all those arts which you yourself delight in, that is the best. I congratulate with you, therefore, very heartily, which I can do with great truth, and not less also with myself, that he whom we were obliged to love, of what temper soever he had happened to be, proves to be such a one as we should choose to love."* Again, the younger Lentulus writes: "I did not see your son when I was with Brutus, as he had just gone into winter quarters with the cavalry, but I had the satisfaction of finding that he was in general esteem, which gave me great pleasure, not only on his own account and yours, but likewise upon my own; for I can but consider a son of yours who thus copies out his father's virtues, as standing in the relation to me of a brother."†

The fine qualities so extolled in these letters had, as we have seen, attracted the notice and high encomiums of Brutus; and it is clear from several letters to Atticus, that in the judgment of his father, the young Cicero while at Athens had well profited by the very great facilities which that refined seat of the Muses afforded, and that an elegant

*Ep. Fam. 12. xvi.

† Melmoth 3. 320.

taste accompanied his knowledge, nor was this judgment formed with the blind impartiality of paternal love; for when pronounced it is evident that Cicero had been cautious in listening to his praises, and took his opinion from sources, in which there was no great danger of deception.*

The young man's letters had highly gratified his father; and if the following one of the only two preserved, disclose his genuine feelings, there was in his character an engaging suavity and most commendable filial piety.

CICERO the son to TIRO.

"While I was expecting every day with impatience your messengers from Rome, they came at last on the forty-sixth day after they left you; their arrival was extremely agreeable to me; for my father's most indulgent and most affectionate letter gave me an exceeding joy, which was still highly increased by the receipt of yours; so that instead of being sorry for my late omission of writing, I was rather pleased that my silence had afforded me so particular a proof of your humanity. It is a great pleasure, therefore, to me, that you accepted my excuse so readily. I do not doubt my dearest Tiro but that the reports which are now brought of me, gave you a real satisfaction. It shall be my care and endeavor that this growing fame of me shall every day come more and more confirmed to you, and since you promise to be the trumpeter of my praises, you may venture to do it with assurance, for the past errors of my youth have so mortified me, that my mind does not only abhor the facts themselves, but my ears cannot even endure the mention of them. I am perfectly assured that in all this regret and solicitude, you have borne no small share with me, nor is it to be wondered at; for though you wish me all success for my sake, you are engaged also to

* A Cicerone mihi literæ sane *πεπινωμεναι*, et bene longæ. Cætera autem vel fingi possunt *πινος* literarum significat doctiorem. [ad Att. 14. vii.] Mehercule ipsius literæ sic et *φιλοστοργως* et *εμπινως* scriptæ ut eas vel in acroasi audeam legere; quo magis illi indulgendum puto.—*Ad. Att. xv. xvii.*

do it for your own; since it was always my resolution to make you the partner of every good that may befall me. If I have before, therefore, been the occasion of sorrow to you, so it shall now be my business to double your joy on my account. You must know that I live in the utmost intimacy with Cratippus, and like a son rather than a scholar; for I not only hear his lectures with pleasure, but am infinitely delighted with his conversation: I spend whole days with him, and frequently a part of the night; for I prevail with him as often as I can to sup with me, and in our familiar chat as we sit at table, the night steals upon us without thinking of it, whilst he lays aside the severity of his philosophy, and jokes amongst us with all the good humor imaginable. Contrive, therefore, to come to us as soon as possible and see this agreeable and excellent man. For what need I tell you of Bruttius, whom I never part with out of my sight. His life is regular and exemplary, and his company the most entertaining. He has the art of introducing questions of literature into conversation, and seasoning philosophy with mirth. I have hired a lodging for him in the next house to me, and support his poverty as well as I am able out of my narrow income. I have begun also to declaim in Greek under Cassius, but chose to exercise myself in Latin with Bruttius. I live likewise in great familiarity and perpetual company with those whom Cratippus brought with him from Mitylene, who are men of learning and highly esteemed by him. Epicrates also, the leading man at Athens, and Leonidas, spend much of their time with me, and many others of the same rank. This is the manner of my life at present. As to what you write about Gorgias he was useful to me indeed in my daily exercise of declaiming; but I gave up all considerations for the sake of obeying my father, who wrote peremptorily that I should dismiss him instantly. I complied, therefore, without hesitation, lest by showing any reluctance I might raise in him a suspicion of me. Besides I reflected that it would seem indecent to deliberate upon the judgment of a father. Your zeal, however, and

advice upon it are very agreeable. I admit your excuse of want of leisure; for I know how much your time is commonly taken up. I am mightily taken with your purchase of a farm, and heartily wish you joy in it. Do not wonder at my congratulating you in this part of my letter, for it was the same part of yours in which you informed me of the purchase. You have a place now where you may drop all the forms of the city, and are become a Roman of the old rustic stamp. I see you bartering for your country wares, or consulting with your bailiffs, or carrying off from your table in a corner of your vest the seeds of your fruits and melons for your gardens. But to be serious, I am as much concerned as you are, that I happened to be out of the way, and could not assist you on that occasion; but depend upon it my Tiro, I will make you easy one time or other, if fortune does not disappoint me; especially since I know that you have bought this farm for the common use of us both. I am obliged to you for your care in executing my order, but beg of you that a librarian may be sent to me in all haste, and especially a Greek one; for I waste much of my time in transcribing the lectures and books that are of use to me. Above all things, take care of your health, that we may live to hold many learned conferences together. I recommend Athenæus to you. Adieu.”*

When Sextus Pompey who commanded a large fleet and army in Sicily, made peace with the triumvirate, it was one of its conditions that the exiled Romans should be restored to their country and fortunes; and Cicero returned to Rome where he for some time remained in the condition of a private noble,† abstaining from all affairs of state, and attached to the last to the republican principles, which throughout the latter part of his life, were in the field upheld. He had, however, been honored by Octavius, and after the decisive battle of Actium, in which Antony, the destroyer of his father, was forever ruined, was made by the victor his partner in the consulate. It is true that in

* Ep. Fam. xvi. xxi.

† Appian. Middleton.

the meantime he had again fallen into the profligate course once so ingenuously deplored, and yielded to a vice which has forever associated his name with reproach; the more indelible, as the state of Rome for the residue of his life was such as to preclude a display of the virtues which he did in truth possess, and which as we have seen were often made signally to subserve the noble purposes to which his youth had been devoted.* His aberrations, criminal as they really were, attracted naturally the greater notice because of his high name and rank, and were in proportion, we doubt not, the more generally bruited and condemned; for there is nothing surer than that

“ *Greatest scandal waits on greatest state.
The moon being clouded, presently is mist :
But little stars may hide them when they list.*” †

It is probable too, that the comparative moral excellence of his father's private life influenced in no small degree the public censure of his vice.

To Pliny does the young Cicero chiefly owe the immortal infamy coupled with his name. This writer, who seems to have been industrious in embodying the statistics of the cup, speaks of drunkards, who having slept off their debauch, returned to the charge, drinking glass after glass without taking breath, and to make a parade of their strength, swallowing it with such greediness, that they were obliged to give it back immediately, which they reiterated many times at the same sitting; ‡ and adds that such was the habit of Marc Antony, who wrote a book of his

* “ But it has been your lot my son to come into the world amid the broils of a divided state; and yet in the command you held under Pompey, even in this very war, you acquitted yourself as a man at arms to all purposes; an excellent horseman, a person of indefatigable industry, and all this both to the common satisfaction of the glorious general and the whole commonwealth. *But the commonwealth itself sunk here, and so did your glory.*”—*De Offic.* 2.

† Rape of Lucrece.—*Shakspeare.*

‡ Cautissimos ex his balineis coqui videmus, exanimisque efferri. Jam vero alios lectum expectare non posse, imo vero nec tunicam, nudos ibi protinus anhelos ingentia vasa corripere, velut ad ostentationem virium, ac plane infundere, ut statim evomant, rursusque hauriant, idque iterum tertiumque.

Plin. Nat. His. xiv. xxii,

triumphs in hard drinking. The same author tells us that the young Cicero made himself famous for the quantity of wine he could swallow at a single draft, as if he had undertaken to rob the murderer of his father of the glory of being the first drunkard in the empire.* It also appears, that on one occasion when heated with wine, he had thrown a goblet at the head of Agrippa, who was in Rome, the next in dignity to the emperor; provoked as Dr. Middleton suggests, by some difference in politics, or some affront to the late champions, and vanquished cause of the republic.

We have thus presented the fairer qualities, together with the loathsome vice of this young Roman, and readily join in reprobation of the latter; but we do not the less believe that succeeding ages have been most unjust in loudly proclaiming the one, and wrongfully overlooking the other. It is the demand of justice that we contemplate his character as a whole, and not heedlessly rank him with the wretch of the satirist,

*A vitis,
Monstrum, nulla virtute redemptum.*

In the close of the life of his father, Plutarch says, that under the auspices of the son when consul, the senate took down the statues of Antony; defaced all the monuments of his honor, and decreed that for the future none of his family should bear the name of Marcus; thus the divine vengeance reserved the completion of Antony's punishments to the house of Cicero. We incline to infer from the character of the son, that he must have believed the course of Augustus, in regard to his father's death, involuntary as was pretended; else it is not probable, that with his spirit and filial piety, of both of which there is no lack of

* Sed nimirum hanc gloriam auferre Cicero voluit interfectori patris sui Marco Antonio. Is enim, ante eum avidissime apprehenderat hanc palmam, edito etiam volumine de sua ebrietate. Pliny remarks that Antony vomited this book, a short time before the battle of Actium. Hortensius's son was also dissipated. Cicero tells us that in Cilicia he had, from respect to his father, once invited him, and only once, to supper.

proof, he would have deigned to partake at all in the imperial kindness which appears to have been extended to him to the last; as he died it is thought a short time after his proconsular government of Syria.*

Cicero, the nephew, if clear of the vice which stained his cousin's character, appears to have been mischievous and without principle. Devoid of all delicacy as to the means of advancing his fortunes, he not merely followed Cæsar, but was industrious in traducing his uncle, supposing that course grateful to the conqueror. Indeed it would seem from the following letter, that his own father, if it suited an emergency, was in nothing spared. We have somewhere learned, however, that in the melancholy scene which closed their lives, he was at once affectionate and brave.

“There is nothing new,” writes Cicero, “but that Hirtius has been quarrelling in my defence with our nephew Quintus, who takes all occasions of saying every thing bad of me, and especially at public feasts; and when he has done with me falls next upon his father. He is thought to say nothing so credible as that we are both irreconcilable to Cæsar; that Cæsar should trust neither of us, and even beware of me. This would be terrible, did I not see that our *king* is persuaded that I have no spirit left.”†

* Middleton.

† Ad. Atticum 13, xxxvii.

SECTION VIII.

CICERO was tall and slender, and remarkable for a neck particularly long. He does not appear to have inherited a strong constitution; but through uniform temperance and well regulated exercise, with the use of the bath and rubbing of his body, he imparted to it a strength and health, which, in spite of professional fatigues, and industry never surpassed, he retained through life with but few interruptions. His principal remedy, when indisposed, was rigorous abstinence. We learn from Plutarch, that "when a young man, his habit was lean, and his stomach so weak that he was constrained to be very sparing in his diet, and not to eat till a late hour in the day, and that he was so exact in all respects, that he had his stated hours for rubbing and the exercise of walking.

"As to his features," says Dr. Middleton, they were regular and manly, and his countenance retained to the last a comeliness and dignity, with a certain air of cheerfulness and serenity, that imprinted both affection and respect."*

"In his clothes and dress," the same writer remarks, "which the wise have usually considered as an index of the mind, he observed what he prescribes in his book of offices, a modesty and decency adapted to his rank and character; a perpetual cleanliness without the appearance of pains; free from the affectation of singularity; and avoiding the extremes of a rustic negligence and foppish delicacy, both of which are equally contrary to true dignity; the one im-

* *Ei quidem facies decora ad senectutem, prosperaque permansit valetudo.—Asin. Poll. apud. Senec. Suasor.*

plying an ignorance or illiberal contempt of it, the other a childish pride and ostentation of proclaiming our pretensions to it.”* In this matter to which the reader may think that the wise men referred to have attached a more than merited importance, the good sense of Cicero is obvious. Polonius himself could have detected no fault in his precepts. It appears, however, that his great rival Hortensius, was not of this school, and was studious to excess of elegance in attire. We learn from an entertaining French work before us, of which we have made frequent use, that he dressed himself before a mirror, and was as careful in adjusting the folds of his toga as in the structure of his periods. He took them in and fastened them with a girdle, the knot of which was so cunningly tied, that it was lost in the folds of his robe, which seemed to flow negligently loose. Having on one occasion taken great pains in decking his person, finding himself in a very narrow passage where his colleague—for he was then consul—ruffled him somewhat, he treated the violence to his toga as a capital affair, and cited the author of so singular an injury, before the judges. Quintilian has not overlooked such things, and explains at length, in what manner an orator should manage his gown when pleading; and there can indeed be no doubt, when we consider the Roman costume, that a just taste in this particular must have been no unimportant component of that grace, without which the finest eloquence loses a charm.†

“We need not want to be told,” says Bulwer, “that the Roman nobles were polished and urbane; that they practised all the seductions of manners; we ought to know this at once by reading the methods of their elections.”‡ How

* De Offic. 1. 36.

† Could any doubt exist of the importance of grace and elegance in action, the story which is told of Burke would dispel it. Were we to judge from his speeches as we read them, we should infer, to use his own language as applied to Sheridan, that thousands would have hung with rapture on his accents; yet it is said that a celebrated advocate, [Erskine, if we recollect aright,] could not with patience hear to its conclusion, one of his speeches in the House of Commons, which from bad manner lost its attraction, but which in itself, was of so seductive power, that Erskine ceased not to read his copy until it was in tatters.

‡ England and the English. i. lii.

far Cicero was governed by the interested motive which the delightful novelist has suggested, we will not undertake to determine; but there can, we think, be no doubt, that in his intercourse with society, there was an unusual share of the suavity and elegance of manners, which, together with intellectual culture and moral rectitude, make up our idea of the finished gentleman. These, without other cause, might well have sprung from his mild nature and great good sense; and though in the admirable work addressed to his son, he does not raise them to the elevated rank which the courtly noble of the past age has claimed for them, yet his letters teach how keenly he was alive to the charm they impart, and how sensibly was felt the want of them even in those the most recommended by character and virtues to his esteem. He often declares that "the letters of Brutus were churlish, unmannerly and arrogant, and that he regarded neither what nor to whom he was writing;"* but in no one instance, as we remember, was he betrayed in his replies, into an expression which the highest delicacy and breeding could arraign. It is true that the gentleman of our day, howsoever deeply offended, would not allow himself the license of the speech against Piso, nor is it probable that a modern assembly would tolerate its presence; yet we should bear in mind, that such unmitigated invectives were common at Rome, and that a most afflictive and justly resentful part of Cicero's life was associated with the name of Piso.†

If in any thing he may be thought to have forgotten the politeness which distinguished him, it was as we have said, in the indulgence of his wit. Were it at all important to his standing with after ages, that his pretensions as a humorist should have been established, we might lament the loss of the collections of his sayings known to have been made by his friend Trebonius and freedman Tiro; as those of them preserved by Plutarch, and such of them as we gather from his own writings, not merely exclude the idea

* Middleton.

† Piso and his colleague were instrumental in banishing him.

of great power as a wit, but subject him, as we think, to the imputation we have suggested.*

Even at a time when the wealth of the great was far more extended than that of the nobles of our day, Cicero was lord of an ample fortune, and lived in style suited to his dignity. His residence in Rome was splendid, and throughout Italy he possessed the most delightful and magnificent villas. It is said that some writers enumerate eighteen houses in different parts of the country, all of which excepting the family seat at Arpinum, were purchased or built by himself. These he was wont to call the eyes of Italy.†

The princely fortunes of the prominent Romans flowed chiefly from their governments and commands abroad, where the provinces were often made to feel the heaviest oppression, and from bequests of clients, rather than from family inheritance, or from patient industry in any of the avocations usual with us. With all his upright determination to save the province of Cilicia from unjust contribution, there was fairly due to Cicero at the expiration of the year, about one hundred and twenty thousand dollars of our money; and he had also at different periods of his life been made the heir to property valued at near a million. Hence, though

*Cicero tells us that Cæsar was careful in ascertaining his sayings: Quintilian thought that it was easier to find in them what might be rejected, than to add to them; and Middleton further informs us, that his fame as a wit was as celebrated as that of his eloquence.

†Cur ocellas Italiæ, villulas meas non video.—*Ad. Att. xvi. vi.* Dr. Middleton, when speaking of the seat at Arpinum, indulges in the following uncalled for and illiberal indirect attack upon a church, which, whatever may have been the misrule of some of its pontiffs—by no learned and sensible Catholic denied—is nevertheless not more distinguished for its venerable antiquity and heart touching solemnities, than for its comprehensive and consoling faith, and has besides commanded the fervent homage of intellect quite as powerful and every way as well regulated as his own. We are slow to liken this learned divine to the almost perfect More, and sweetest Fenelon. “But there cannot,” says the Doctor, “be a better proof of the delightfulness of the place than that it is now possessed by a convent of Monks and called the villa of St. Dominick. Strange revolution! to see Cicero’s porticos converted to monkish cloisters? the seat of the most refined reason, wit and learning, to a nursery of superstition, bigotry and enthusiasm? What a pleasure must it give to these Dominican Inquisitors to trample on the ruins of a man whose writings, by spreading the light of reason and liberty through the world, have been one great instrument of obstructing their unwearied pains to enslave it.”

his paternal inheritance was moderate, and his obedience to the laws prohibiting professional rewards exemplary, we can feel no surprise at the extent and splendor of his domestic establishments. Besides, he was often enabled to exert his authority in behalf of foreign kings and states, from which it was usual, and with no dishonor, to accept of presents; and it was not until the close of his life that he put away Terentia, from whom he had a large estate; all restored to that lady, however, at the time of the divorce.

In his domestic duties and attachments, no man could be more exemplary. His children were the objects of his devoted regard; and it would seem that in the relation of master he was eminently kind; sparing no effort to enlighten the minds of his slaves when found worthy of his care, and in every way as far as was practicable, mitigating the hardship of their condition. We have before spoken of his attachment to Tiro,* and there were not wanting others of his slaves to share largely in his affection.†

With regard to the rupture with his wives we incline to think that the fate of Terentia was not undeserved, and that the divorce of Publilia if justly charged, was not less so. The first soon sought, and with no little voracity, as we have seen, indemnity in marriage; and it is probable that with money and personal charms, the latter was not long without a like consolation; if indeed a youthful beauty can be imagined to have required it, in separating from a distressed and sorrowing old man.

It is scarce possible to conceive a warmer fraternal love than that of Cicero for Quintus; nor was his mischievous nephew without his regard; and in both he was as untiring as their insolence and ingratitude were hateful. It is true that when Quintus endeavored to affect him injurious-

*"Tiro was a favorite slave of Cicero, who trained him up in his family, and formed him under his own immediate tuition. The probity of his manners, the elegance of his genius, and his uncommon erudition, recommended him to his master's peculiar esteem and affection."—*Melmoth*.

†"I have nothing more to write," says Cicero to Atticus, "and my mind indeed is somewhat ruffled at present, for Sothitheus, my reader, is dead, a hopeful youth, which has affected me more than one would imagine the death of a slave ought to do."—*Ad. Atticum*. i. xii.

ly with Cæsar, he saw with dismay how little was deserved esteem or tenderness; yet his perfidy, shocking as it was, made no enduring impression upon a mind, benevolent as gifted; and we find this brother a short time after, the object of affection, and even bounty; whilst the interests of the nephew, though it was not possible to respect him, were repeatedly the objects of his care.

On his friendship it is needless to enlarge. The work upon that subject, the letters to Atticus, and to others, are lasting memorials of its ardent and constant nature. His avowed warmth of attachment, nevertheless, to Brutus in the closing scenes of their lives, may be well questioned. It is not easy to love those who lavish reproach in tones so magnificent; and in this case we doubt not, the sting of rebuke was sharpened by its justice.*

Of gratitude, as we before said, he speaks as the mother of the virtues. His indulgence of this feeling, however, if not overrated, was in the case of Pompey unchastened, undeserved, and in a very great degree pernicious to Rome, and therefore hurtful to his fame; prompting him to overlook the paramount claims of his country, and to prostitute his eloquence in promoting the power and wishes of a man whose object, to say the best of it, was not to be reconciled with the being, far less the safety, of a free state. In short, if not yielding in his concessions, principally to fear, which is believed to be the truth, he lavished in his practice of this high duty upon friendship what was emphatically due to his country; and either his irresolution or heedless profusion of gratitude, was often not a whit less harmful than would have been positive treachery.

* Mr. Guthrie has very handsomely depicted ancient friendships. "If there is any material difference," he says, "between human nature in that age and this, it lies in the conception of this virtue. The following pages evince that there was a time when friendship in the human breast could rise into a passion strong as their love and sacred as their religion, without the impurities which sometimes debased the one, and the superstition that always polluted the other. The friendship of our author for Atticus is full of nice suspicions and fond endearments. It has every characteristic of violent but virtuous passion. It breathes every tender grace that delights the mind, and awakens every soft emotion that affects the heart. The language of the most enamored poet to his mistress is faint, compared to the voice of Cicero's friendship for Atticus."—*Preface to Trans. Lett. to Atticus.*

Gratitude if not occupying the high rank assigned to it by Cicero is undoubtedly among the most indispensable of duties. Assuming that he was in truth swayed by excess of it, in his unworthy subserviency to Pompey, it is but fair, when subjecting him to the just strictures of philosophy, that we allow him the full benefit of its concessions, if indeed the latter can be said to reach a case, where obedience to a generous impulse actually compromised the dearest rights and interests of a whole people. "Excess," says an admired writer, "in the very name, implies culpability even where the things in which it appears are of a virtuous and laudable nature. So that whoever advances his virtues beyond the line of rectitude, errs no less than he who stops at an equal interval on this side of it; *yet at the same time there is something far more noble and generous in errors of excess than of defect.*"*

Cicero was fond of partaking in the entertainments of his friends, and clear of the moroseness too often accompanying the great men of earth; but as far as we can learn he appears, throughout life, to have shunned excess, as fatal not only to his good name and health, but to those hopes of glory, by which in all the stages of it, he was perhaps too ardently animated. His unrestrained facetiousness on festive occasions, made him a frequent and most welcome guest, and if the reader will recall the letter describing the supper to Cæsar, he may judge how eminently such a man must have been qualified to shine at a Roman table, where more than is usual with us, intellectual pleasures seasoned the repast.†

There is a letter extant, from which we may infer his re-

* Knox's Christian Philosophy, 176.

† De Senectute. cap. xiii. xiv. Cicero complains that on one occasion he had indulged his palate at some cost. 'For since,' he writes, 'our men of taste are grown so fond of covering their tables with the productions of the earth which are excepted by law, they have found a way of dressing mushrooms and all other vegetables, so palatably, that nothing can be more delicious. I happened to fall upon these at Lentulus's augural supper, and was in consequence attacked so violently, that it is now only that I begin to have ease. Thus I, who used to command myself with oysters and lampreys, was caught with beets and mallows.'

Ad Gallum. Ep. Fam. vii. xxvi.

gard to the decencies of life; though some may think that on the occasion of which he writes, the proper course would have been to leave the table. Invited to sup with the wit Volumnius, Cytheris, a courtesan, once the slave but then the mistress of his host, appeared at supper, and Cicero informs his friend "that he never suspected that she would have been of the party, and that though he was always fond of cheerful entertainments, yet nothing of that sort had ever pleased him when young, much less now he was old; "*Me vero nihil istorum me juvenem quidem movit unquam, ne nunc senem.*"

Though never permitting them to withdraw him from duties, which his post in the state, professional engagements, or habitual industry imposed, he not only gladly joined in these feasts of his friends, but partook freely of the variety of public amusements which Rome afforded, "*Daignant cultiver,*" says Voltaire, "*l'amitié d'Esopus et de Roscius, allant au théâtre, et laissant aux petits esprits, leur constante gravité, qui n'est que la masque de la médiocrité.*"

He appears to have been, in a signal degree, clear of the private vices polluting the age in which it was his sad destiny to live. No man could be more exempt from avarice, or a sterner enemy to mercenary natures; and whilst the great were too often covetous of the high dignities of Rome, with the sole and sordid view to the provincial commands they ensured, he, though he sought them with equal ardor, was altogether careless of accumulation, and prompted by love of glory alone; the elevated passion for which more than any other he was distinguished, and which as we have said, was the pervading genius of his greatness; nor do we think that the severest scrutiny could expose him to the least well founded imputation of incontinence, the other leading vice of the day, though here he has been arraigned for enormities which would not have ranked obscurely in the revolting narratives of Tacitus, or yet more frightful orgies of De Sade. The reader will remember that his indulgence of one of nature's holiest affections had subjected him to a charge at which humanity shudders, and

howsoever ridiculous this and other calumny may have been, should feel no surprise that the foulest accusations, believed or not, would very readily be propagated in an age where abuse of the republican statesmen was in vogue at court, and where even to Cato,

“Virgil paid *one honest line*.”*

We will now attempt, making Cicero himself the witness, to sustain the imputation of vanity, which, with the great majority of writers we have risked, maugre the contemptuous attack of Middleton, upon the conceited pedants, as the doctor is pleased to name them, who have hazarded a similar charge. In the judgment of that learned and ingenious apologist, who was too often seduced by his admiration of the really glorious features in the character of his idol, the self-praise of the orator was not merely excusable, but in many cases even necessary; and Quintilian, who was also an enthusiast when speaking of Cicero, seems to have excused it on grounds of self defence. “The frequent commemoration of his acts,” says the latter, “was not made so much for glory, as for defence; to repel calumny, and vindicate his measures when they were attacked.”† Happily however, for the pedants, there is a host of evidence, utterly unaffected by any of the reasons weighing with these writers, and they may therefore with perfect safety, concede all they contend for, short of yielding to their opinion, and still pronounce the Roman among the vainest of mankind. We cannot imagine how any

* Pope. *Ep. to Sat.* Cicero was particularly intimate with Caerellia. Dion Cassius has attempted to build some scandal upon this fact, though he speaks of the lady as having reached at the time the imposing age of seventy; and as neither in his nor any other record that we have met, is she represented as in any thing resembling the modern wonders, Diane de Poitiers, beloved of a youthful king, Ninon and others, we are satisfied that the intimacy on one side at least was the result exclusively of congenial tastes in literature. There is some reason, however, to think that Caerellia mistook her friend, and was so determined upon a marriage as to make it necessary to call in Atticus.

†At plerumque illud quoque non sine aliqua ratione fecit. Ut illorum quæ egerat in consulatu frequens commemoratio possit videri non gloriæ magis quam defensionis data—plerumque contra inimicos atque obtrectatores, plus vindicat sibi; erant enim tuenda cum objicerentur.—*Quint. xi. i.*

man of sense, after a perusal of Cicero's works, abounding as they do in self-applause, absolutely nauseous, and equally spontaneous, can seriously doubt the vanity of their writer. Indeed, it is difficult to credit the sincerity of such doubt. These works show that he scarce slighted an occasion in blazoning his own renown: his eloquence and virtues are frequent themes, and in language the most inflated. But fortunately for us, whilst we readily rejoice in conceding the one, a neighboring page not seldom proves the total absence, or extraordinary character, of the other.

In the celebrated letter to Luceius, Cicero does not hesitate, after requesting him to write the story of his consulship, to press him, in the statement of his glories, to slight the truth. "If," says he, "you do not think the facts themselves worth the pains of adorning, you will yet allow so much to friendship, to affection, and even that favor, which you have so laudably disclaimed in your prefaces, as not to confine yourself scrupulously to the strict laws of history and the rules of truth."* Dr. Middleton attempts to sustain this extraordinary request, but seems to have been conscious that there was more than common need of defence, as he speedily abandons the consideration of its moral stain, and bespeaks attention to the elegant structure of the letter, arguing too that the request was made upon an absurd or improbable supposition that Luceius did not think the acts themselves worth praising. We will not stop to defend the inviolability of truth, and can only feel surprise that a very learned, and for aught we know, excellent man, should have allowed enthusiasm to have betrayed him into a defence, howsoever feeble, of inordinate vanity and contempt of the best of sanctions.

That Cicero, in extolling his own actions, was often prompted solely by his vanity, and with no view to weaken a wrong, sustained or apprehended, is manifest, and upon high authority exclusive of his own.† It is said in Plutarch, that though his authority after his consulship, was at its

* Ep. Fam. 12.

† Plutarch. in Cic. Ad. Att. xii. xxv. Orat. 325. Ep. Fam. ix. xlv.

height, and though all were charmed with his writings, his incessant boastings excited a general disgust; that Catiline and Lentulus were the constant burdens of his song; and that the "blemish stuck to him like an incurable disease." Had he not been insatiate in his desire of honors, he could not at this time have failed to be satisfied; for his own proud expressions* teach us how profusely they were bestowed; and with never sleeping fidelity we are reminded of them by his eulogist. Where then in the height of his influence was the need of self-applause, admitting that in any case it is defensible? The sense of his public virtues did not spring from his own undying determination to blazon them, but from their saving effects; and he ought to have known, as we doubt not he did know, that so far from preserving his authority, nothing could more effectually shake it, or was more thoroughly calculated to engender, as it did engender, contempt and disgust.† Dr. Middleton is, however, no friend to the testimony of Plutarch, when adverse to the fame of Cicero, though when suited to his purposes he is any thing but abstemious in the use of it.

No man was more wise than Cicero, in his judgment of the means to mitigate or soften envy, arising from the possession of high dignity and power; and had he kept within the limit of his own admirable precepts, much of the stain we now regret might have been avoided. In his second Book de Oratore, "when you want," he says, "to allay envy, you are to say that such honors were acquired through much toil and many dangers, and that they have not been applied to the possessor's private advantage, but

* Me Q. Catulus princeps hujus ordinis, parentem patriæ nominavit; L. Gellius, his audientibus, civicam coronam debere a republica dixit.—*In Piso*. 3.

† Those who proclaim their own actions are thought not so much to do so because they performed them, as to have done them that they might proclaim them. So that which would have appeared great if told by another, is lost when related by the party himself; for when men cannot deny the fact, they reflect upon the vanity of the author. Wherefore, if any thing is done not worthy to be mentioned, the action itself is blamed, and on the other hand, if it be really commendable, you are not the less blamed for mentioning it.—*Pliny*. L. v. Ep. xii.

to that of others; and that if he has seemed to have acquired any glory, yet so self denying was he, that though he had justly earned it by his dangers, it was so far from giving him pleasure, that he undervalued and set it all aside; and we must by all means endeavor to beat down all reflections upon his greatness, and to work upon our speech, so as that the distinction of his fortune should still be mingled with the reflection upon his toils and hardships. The reason of this is because the world is apt to envy; it is the reigning, the standing vice, and feeds on exalted and flourishing fortune. Compassion is moved, if the hearer can be tempted to apply to his own case the afflicting circumstances that are deplored in another's, whether they are already passed or dreaded, or by looking upon another, frequently to turn his eye into his own breast."

We cannot but suppose that the letters which in part we shall present, must have somewhat shaken Middleton's determination to screen his favorite from the charge we have in hand. "I have sent you," says Cicero to Atticus, "my treatise on *glory*. You will, therefore, bestow upon it the care which you usually do upon my productions. But let the exceptionable passages be marked, and when you have in company suitable auditors, Servius may read them, but only when they are exhilarated with wine. I am greatly delighted with it myself, and I rather wish you were so. Farewell."*

In another letter he exclaims: "Why my friend are you so much alarmed at my making you answerable for the reception of my books from Varro. If you have any diffi-

* Ad. Att. xvi. ii. "The treatise on glory was divided into two books, and a copy of it was in being after the art of printing was discovered. Petrarch received it as a present from Reymundus Superiantius, and unfortunately lent it to his schoolmaster who put it into pawn to relieve his necessities, but died before he could take it out, and thus Petrarch never could hear of it. About two hundred years after, it was in the possession of Bernardus Justinianus who bequeathed it to a monastery of nuns from whence it could never be recovered. The conjecture of learned men is that Petrus Alcyonius, the physician to that nunnery, had purloined it, and transferred what he thought proper into his own writings, which the critics observe to be of very unequal composition, especially his Book de Exilio. If this conjecture be true, it is natural to suppose that Alcyonius destroyed the original to prevent the discovery.—*Guthrie* 3. 315.

culties even now, let me know them? *Sure nothing can be more elegant.*" The original here is, "*Nihil est illis elegantius.*" Guthrie has literally translated it, and would have been rejoiced to relieve Cicero from the stain of so gross a vanity, though he thinks an attempt of that kind somewhat desperate. The Frenchman, Mongault, has no question that the writer meant to extol his own work, and accordingly translates the passage "*Il n'y a rien de mieux écrit que ce livre.*" There is, it is true, in the after part of the letter an allusion to the uncommon elegance, in the binding, the writing, and the like, of the dedicated copy; and it would certainly be grateful, could we imagine that the exceptionable passage, had the least relation to the external beauty of the volume; but it is folly to believe that Cicero deemed so meanly of the learned Varro, as to have for a moment supposed that he could be swayed in his judgment of the work, because of its attractive dress. Besides, the letter itself, discountenances any such belief; though it does clearly show, that in the judgment of the author, the compliment to his friend, was not without a grace, in the outward beauty of the book.*

Speaking of pathos, which he calls the sceptre of eloquence, "I myself," says Cicero, "have possessed a tolerable share of this, or it may be a trifling one; but as I always spoke with uncommon warmth and impetuosity, I have frequently forced my antagonists to relinquish the field. Hortensius, an eminent speaker, once declined to answer me, though in defence of an intimate friend. Catiline, a most audacious traitor, being publicly accused by me in the senate house, was struck dumb with shame, and Curio, the father, when he attempted to reply to me in a weighty and important cause which concerned the honor of his family, sat suddenly down and said that I had bewitched him out of his *memory*: no very flattering compliment this lat-

* Varro was a senator of the first distinction both for his birth and merit, Cicero's intimate friend, and esteemed the most learned man in Rome. He had served with Pompey in Spain, but after the defeat of Afranius and Petreius, quitted his arms and retired to his studies. Of the five hundred volumes written by Varro, all are lost except the treatises de Re Rustica, and de Lingua Latina.

ter, if he were the same Curio, which we doubt not, who according to Cicero himself, was deficient to a miracle in this faculty.'*'

It would be most easy to produce abundant proof, other than that which we have presented, of this great man's weakness, and without recourse to the constant displays of it in his magnificent public efforts; but to say the truth, it is with unaffected pain that we speak at all of a foible, we would have gladly overlooked; and should not have failed in a great degree to do so, had not an author of great learning and reputation, very generally read and recommended, with no evidence whatever, and in the teeth of the strongest, contemptuously denied it. The pedants, however, may find some consolation, can they allow it to be such, in the fact that their assailant was encumbered with but few rivals in his opinion. The truth is, that the vain glory of Cicero was a blemish which many of the best and wisest, unless swayed by an admiration it is far from easy to condemn, have at all times conceded, reprovèd and deplored.†

But whilst we believe that the vanity of Cicero will not admit of question, and will be betrayed by no admiration of his parts, into its approval, it is very certain that the foible, great as it was, found the utmost palliation in his transcendent eloquence and learning; and it is the more difficult to censure it in his case, venial as at the worst it is, if we reflect at all upon the multitude of other and powerful sources of the defect. As of the Italian, Pietro Aretino,

*Brut. 46.

† It is remarkable that one very wise man, Dr. Franklin, should not merely have respected vanity wherever he met with it, but have ranked it among the other sweets of life, and regarded the person indulging it, as authorized in many cases to thank God for it as a blessing. Does not the Doctor, however, ascribe to vanity, results more justly due to well regulated love of praise, or rather does he not confound them? "The generality of men," he writes in his memoirs, "hate vanity in others, however strongly they may be tinctured with it themselves; for myself I pay obeisance to it wherever I meet with it, persuaded that it is advantageous, as well to the individual whom it governs, as to those who are within the sphere of its influence. Of consequence, it would in many cases, not be wholly absurd, that a man should count his vanity among the other sweets of life, and give thanks to Providence for the blessing."

whose weakness was the same, it may be said of Cicero, that "the emulation of the greatest was excited for his favor; his levee resembled that of a mighty monarch, and his friendship was sought by the great in power, the powerful in wealth, and the glorious in fame." To this, if we add the proud titles he had won, there is scarce less folly in dealing too harshly with his fame, because of this infirmity, than there is error in all attempt to disguise it. Besides, though vain himself, no one was more clear of envy or more eminently distinguished for that liberality which should ever go along with, and perhaps does generally accompany exalted powers. Plutarch is warm in extolling this bright quality of the Roman; and tells us that "howsoever insatiate was his desire of honor, he was never unwilling that others should have their share, and that he was most liberal in his works, not only to the ancients, but to those of his own time." It is impossible to escape this conclusion on a perusal of his books, and delightful to recal the multitude of examples they disclose of tribute to genius no less enlightened than magnanimous. "Let us then," says he, "imitate Demosthenes? Good gods! to what else are all my endeavors and wishes directed. But it is perhaps my misfortune not to succeed."* Nor was he more just to the immortal Greek, than to his own immediate and illustrious rival. It is true that when in exile, his suspicions had wronged the friendship of the latter; but in nothing more commendable than placability,† all his resentments vanished at his return; the harmony of their intercourse was completely re-established; and when Hortensius died, the loss was bitterly deplored as no less important to Rome than to himself.

Having, as we think, established the charge of vain glory, in opposition to a writer whom we should have been reluctant to encounter, unless sustained by unanswerable evi-

* *Demosthenem igitur imitemur. O Dii boni quid quasi nos aliud agemus aut quid aliud optamus.—Brut. 417.*

† *Nihil enim laudabilius, nihil magno viro dignius placabilitate et clementia.—De Offic. 1. 25.*

dence, we come now in an enumeration of Cicero's splendid productions, to show to the reader the rich soil in which this foible found nourishment; and here we shall implicitly consult the order of Dr. Middleton, as we are satisfied of his perfect accuracy in this particular.

Plutarch, when speaking of the orator's early thirst of universal knowledge, informs us that in his youth he inclined most strongly to poetry, and that in the judgment of his contemporaries, he was as eminent in that enchanting art as in the one in which his mastery is admitted. This writer adds, that a small poem called Pontius Glaucus, in tetrameter verse, was the first effort of his muse: and that the poem was extant in his day. Glaucus was a fisherman, and having eaten a certain herb, leaped into the sea, and became a god of it. One, not a poet, might imagine that these facts were no very fertile sources of inspiration; yet they seem to have also furnished an argument to one of the tragedies of an early Greek.* Cicero also translated the *Phenomena* of Aratus,† into Latin verse, of which some fragments remain, and wrote a poem in honor of Marius, to which we have before referred, as also to the mistaken prophecy of Scævola in its behalf. There was another poem called Limon, four lines of which Dr. Middleton tells us are preserved by Donatus;‡ but the Doctor's account of its argument is altogether conjectural.

* Æschylus.

† "Aratus was a Greek poet, born at Soli, a town of Cilicia, and lived in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt; he was in principles a Stoick, and acted as physician to the son of Poliorcetes, king of Macedon. His "*Phenomena*," which is still extant, entitles him to the name of astrologer as well as poet. In this piece he describes the nature and motion of the stars, and the particular influences of the heavenly bodies with their various dispositions and relations. Others have translated this work. Germanicus Cæsar did so; and there is a translation in elegant verse by Festus Avienus. Grotius, in the year 1650, published an edition of it with Cicero's fragments, &c. &c. Aratus wrote many other works, and was imitated, or rather translated in many passages of the Georgics; and the Apostle of the Gentiles quotes one of his sentences in a speech to the Athenians: telling them that some of their own poets have said, *Τὸ γὰρ καὶ γενοῦς ἐσμεν*. "For we are also his offspring."—Acts, xvii. xxviii. These words begin the fifth line of the *Phenomena*."

‡ Donatus Ælius was a grammarian, who flourished at Rome in the fourth century. He was one of St. Jerome's masters, and wrote commentaries on Terence and Virgil, which are said to be in great esteem.

It appears from the celebrated invective against Piso, that Cicero saw occasion to defend his verses; not, however, in that case for want of harmony, but to repel a charge of vanity, to which they had often subjected him. It was thought that in the lines "*Cedant arma togæ, concedat laurea linguæ,*" &c. he had been sufficiently complacent in estimating his own glories to the prejudice of others; and it was upon this ground that Piso attacked him, as having provoked by his poetry the exile he suffered. But whether his reputation as a poet were eminent or otherwise in his own day, it is certain that in ours the verdict is far from flattering; and though this may have arisen from a disposition admitted to prevail, to deny, if possible, to one man excellence in more than one department, rather than from real homage to the adverse opinion of Juvenal and others, it is equally clear that the name of Cicero is now never associated with that of the favored votaries of the Muse.* There can be no doubt, at all events, of his ardent love of poesy, and perhaps he was to no poor extent imbued with its spirit, howsoever defective he may have been in the melody of his numbers; and his learned historian has well and fully shown his constant and generous patronage of all the celebrated bards of his time. Accius, Archias, Lucretius, Chilius and Catullus, shared at once his admiration† and his kind-

* Mr. Molyneux, a great mathematician and philosopher; had a high opinion of Sir Richard Blackmore's poetic vein. "All our English poets," except Milton, says he in a letter to Mr. Locke, "have been mere ballad makers in comparison with him," and Mr. Locke replies, "I find with pleasure a strange harmony between your thoughts and mine." Just so a Roman lawyer and Greek historian thought of the poetry of Cicero. But these judgments of men out of their own profession, are little regarded; and Pope and Juvenal will make Blackmore and Tully pass for poetasters to the world's end.—*Note to Pope's works*, 4. lviii.

† Adjicis M. Tullium mira benignitate poetarum ingenia fovisse.—*Plin. Ep.* 3. 15. Ut ex familiari ejus L. Accio poeta audire sum solitus.—*Brut.* 197. Lucretii poemata ut scribis, lita sunt multis luminibus ingenii, et multæ tamen artis.—*Ad. Quint.* 2. xi. Vide *Ad. Atticum.* 1. 9. 16. In that part of Middleton's learned work from which these references are taken, appear the following lines of Catullus, who would seem to have thought of Cicero, much as the latter professed to think of Pompey—that it would be vain to hope, in the long march of time, for any thing so perfect.

"Tully, most eloquent by far,
Of all who have been, or who are,
Or who in ages still to come,
Shall rise of all the sons of Rome,—"

ness; and indeed he was not only nobly clear, as we have seen, of the unworthy feelings too often disgracing rivalry in letters, but in no case with more perfect justice than in his, may we apply that elegant sentiment of a Scotch Reviewer, "*Beautiful is the union of wealth with favor and furtherance for literature, like the costliest flower jar enclosing the loveliest amaranth.*"

The rhetorical pieces supposed to be those which remain on the subject of invention, were written before his admission to the bar; but are afterwards spoken of as scarcely creditable even as productions of early youth.* After his consulship, his labors as an author were renewed, and at that time he finished in the Greek language a commentary or memoir of its transactions; and desired Atticus, should he approve of it, to publish it in Athens and the other cities of Greece. Of this work, which met the most flattering reception abroad, and of which he had himself the highest opinion, we have to lament the loss. It was upon the plan of this memoir that the Latin poem continuing the history to the end of his exile, lost, with the exception of a few fragments, was written; and it was now that his consular orations were collected. There were twelve in number, and four of them are lost; the third, fifth and sixth, with one of the short ones; and some of the rest left maimed and imperfect.† The next piece was the Complete Orator, sent to Atticus, comprehending all that the ancients, and especially Aristotle and Isocrates had taught upon that subject. About this time a treatise on politics, still remaining in some fragments, and among them the dream of Scipio, was also prepared, and two years after, a treatise on laws. This latter, designed as a supplement to the other, was pro-

"To thee Catullus grateful sends
His warmest thanks, and recommends
His humble muse, as much below
All other poets he, as thou
All other patrons dost excel
In power of words and speaking well."—*Catull.* 47.

*Orat. 1. 2. Quintil. xiii. vi.

† Middleton.

bably in six books, though but three, and those imperfect, now remain.*

His efforts in authorship were then suspended until after the fall of Pompey, when temporarily absent from the senate, and realising, as we may suppose, the truth of that eloquent tribute to letters, in his own admirable speech for Archias. "Such," he there observes, "was the divine Africanus, known to past ages, such the amiable Lælius, and the temperate Furius, and such known to this age was Marcus Cato, that brave Roman and learned old man. All these never had applied to learning, but from a consciousness that their innate virtue was improved and enlightened by study. But were pleasure without utility, the sole end of study, yet must you own it to be the most generous, the most humane exercise of the rational faculties. For other exercises are neither proper for all times, all ages or places; but these studies employ us in youth; in prosperity they grace and embellish; in adversity they shelter and support; delightful at home and easy abroad they soften slumber, shorten fatigue and enliven retirement. Though I myself had been incapable of them and had no relish for their charms, yet must they have been the object of admiration, even when I see them in others."† Could Cicero have taught any thing more true? Piety to God apart, to what source, in adverse fortune, can we so assuredly look for solace as to literature? If with faculties to appreciate them, we have books at command, it needs far more than the ordinary ills of life utterly to take away their power to

* Middleton. 2. 92. 96. 166.

† Ex hoc esse hunc numero, quem patres nostri viderunt, divinum hominem Africanum; ex hoc C. Lælium, L. Furium, modestissimos homines et continentissimos; ex hoc fortissimum virum, et illis temporibus doctissimum, M. Catonem illum senem, &c. &c. Nam cætera, neque temporum sunt, neque ætatum omnium, neque locorum: at hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbant; delectant domi, non impediunt foris; pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur. Quod si ipsi hæc neque attingere, neque sensu nostro gustare possemus, tamen ea mirari deberemus, etiam cum in aliis videremus.—*Pro Archia*. vii. This speech, as is well known, was made to sustain the poet's claim to citizenship; but is to be admired rather as a panegyric than as an argument. The orator elsewhere takes occasion to extol the use and beauty of learning, and does so emphatically in his Offices, the book De Senectute, and in his repeated earnest exhortations to philosophy.

soothe; and perhaps this property, next to the aid they afford in the acquisition and improvement of virtue, imparts the highest value to the renown they sometimes confer.

Here Cicero prepared for the use of his son the *Oratorical Partitions*, or the art of ordering and distributing the parts of an oration, which is lost; and now it was that he wrote one of his most entertaining treatises, "*De Claris Oratoribus*," addressed to Brutus. It is in the form of a dialogue, where Brutus, Atticus and he are the speakers, whilst seated in his gardens near a statue of Plato.* This was intended as a fourth book to the three composing the "*Complete Orator*," already mentioned, and not long after, a fifth called "*The Orator*," was prepared at the request of Brutus.† It is, to use his own language, scarcely possible to imagine any thing more elegant than some of these treatises; and from those which we have just noticed, very much is learned of his private history. He had before written a book in praise of Cato, which was answered by Cæsar, and not long after finished a work named "*Hortensius*," in honor of that friend. This is now lost; but it appears to have been read by St. Austin, who, as Middleton informs us, was inflamed by it to the study of the Christian Philosophy; a fruit in itself, the Doctor thinks, an ample trophy; though one would hardly recognize the holy man so extolled on this occasion in the St. Austin of the work upon Miracles; sharing so largely as he there does with contemporary and earlier saints, in not the gentlest charge of credulity, falsehood and imposture.‡

"*The Defence of the Philosophy of the Academy*," in four books, a part of only the first of which remains, was about this time prepared and addressed to Varro. He had before written upon this subject two books named "*Catulus and Lucullus*," and though desirous to suppress them, as having been embraced in the work dedicated to Varro, the latter under its original name still remains entire. A most

* Cum idem placuisset illis, tum in pratulo, propter Platonis statuam consedimus.

† Middleton.

‡ Middleton's Cic. 2. 399. Ibid. Inquiry. Mirac. Pow. 82. '3. 109. 29. 37. et seq.

esteemed work was also in this year produced. It was a treatise, "*De Finibus*:" or of the chief good and ill of man, written in Aristotle's manner, and treats of what is the chief end to which all the views of life ought to be referred in order to make it happy, or what it is which nature pursues as the supreme good, and shuns as the worst of ills,"* and is in five books, addressed to Brutus. Next followed the "*Tusculan Disputations*" upon different questions in philosophy. They consist of five dialogues, which actually took place at the villa whence they have their name.† A funeral oration in honor of a sister of Cato, was composed this year, but is lost to us. Treatises upon "*The Nature of the Gods*," containing the opinions of all the philosophers who had ever written upon that subject, and on "*Divination*:" or the foreknowledge and prediction of events, both still remaining, were in the following year prepared, and were soon followed by others on "*Old Age*," "*Fate and Friendship*," and a translation of Plato's famous dialogue called "*Timæus on the Nature and Origin of the Universe*."‡

Cicero was likewise at this period employed on what he called his "*Anecdote*," which was a history of his own time, or rather of his conduct, and is lost, with the exception of some particulars quoted by Asconius.§ It is perhaps unfortunate for his good name that this production did not survive; as with the adverse testimony derived from other sources, it demands, as we think, even more prevailing eloquence than his own, to relieve him from censure, impairing in no slight degree the lustre of his actions; and this "*Anecdote*," if not successful, might have disclosed grounds of palliation now looked for in vain. Finally, he completed his *Book of Offices*, designed for the guidance of his son, the treatise on "*Glory*," of the singular fate of which we have already spoken, a treatise on "*Topics*," and the "*Stoical Paradoxes*," illustrating the doctrines of the Stoicks.

* Middleton. *De Fin.* 1. 4. † Ibid. *Tusc. Quaest.* 1. 4. Ibid. 2. 3. 3. 3.

‡ Middleton. 3. 55. 7. 8. § Ibid.

An allusion to his letters is here appropriate. Their style is much and justly commended, and as his biographer observes, the importance of their matter, and the dignity of the persons concerned in them, cannot fail to enhance their attraction. Here again, however, with more than usual justice, it is true, that author gives the rein to enthusiasm, and describes their excellence as in all its kinds surpassing if not unapproachable. Their writer seems to have taken no pains to preserve them; and we cannot but think that the utter loss of them would have been of highest value to his fame. Indeed Guthrie, if we recollect aright, thought it doubtful whether Middleton would have ever published his partial work, had he supposed that any one would have undertaken the translation of the epistles to Atticus.*

Upon Cicero's claims as a writer, we forbear to expatiate. Were our judgment, in this respect, as it surely is not, at variance with that of the world at large, the glorious testimony of ages and conscious want of skill as critics would admonish us to be silent.

In the just and beautiful "Discourse on the Life and Character of William Wirt," it is said in reference to the evanescent nature of forensic fame, that "the triumphs of the speaker's eloquence, vivid, brilliant and splendid as they are, live but in the history of their uncertain effects, and in the intoxicating applause of the day; that to incredulous posterity they are a distrusted tradition, the extravagant boasting of an elder age, prone by its nature to disparage the present by the narrated glories of the past; that not all his affectionate biographer's learned zeal could rescue Patrick Henry from the unbelieving smile of but a second generation; *and that the glory of Cicero lives more conspicuously in his written philosophy, than even in his speeches, although transmitted by his own elaborate and polished hand.*"†

That Cicero derives his most certain and valuable fame from this source, is indisputably true; yet we venture the opinion, and it may be, our accomplished friend will agree with us, that had no one of his magnificent thoughts sur-

* Vid. Guthrie. Pref. to Trans. Ep. to Att.

† Kennedy's Dis. 47.

vived, still must his renown have been real and enduring. It was indeed his high fortune to win immortal glory through more than one excellency; and perhaps forensic fame, passing as in general it is, so just, so signally attested is it in his case, would have alone secured it. Of his eloquence not forensic, the everlasting monuments of kindred genius present yet higher proof, and will not permit the unbelieving smile. Quintilian, Pliny, Plutarch and others, did not invent the facts, that the proscribed surrendered their dearest rights, and that popular pleasures and agrarian laws lost for a time their charms; nor can well founded doubt exist that here were really seen trophies of transcendent eloquence.

There was one and a most grave charge to which Cicero was exposed, and here indeed the evidence is not as meagre as could be wished. The charge was that his adherence to the truth was not inflexible, and that to promote his interests, or indulge his vanity, this high sanction was often disregarded. We will present to the reader, who may form his own judgment, several incidents in the life of this eloquent man, where the vice we speak of was thought to have been displayed. It was, as we have seen, usual at that time to serve professionally without reward. He had on one occasion borrowed a very large sum from a client with a view to the purchase of a house. Both the loan and contemplated purchase, were seriously and flatly denied, and when the latter was in fact made, he attempted in the senate, where he was taxed with his duplicity, to laugh away the matter, and told them that they must know little of the world indeed, if they could imagine that any prudent man would raise the price of a commodity by publicly avowing his intention to buy. Dr. Middleton seems inclined to connect this affair with the spurious collections of the orator's jests. There can however be no question as to the judgment of the moralist, lightly as the wary merchant may deem of such craft.*

* Cicero, in the third book *De Officiis*, has written at large upon such matters; but it would be impossible to bring his conduct on the occasion referred to, within the scope of any one of his precepts, except to its utter condemnation.

Again, when in exile, a speech which he had long before prepared, but which he had attempted to suppress, by some untoward means got abroad. It was calculated to retard his recall, and he does not hesitate to press Atticus to deny his authorship, which he thinks he may do with safety, as the speech in question had not undergone the revision and polish which it was his custom to bestow upon his productions.* In another of his letters he speaks with great indifference of denying that he had given freedom to a slave whom he had in fact emancipated, but whose conduct had afterwards displeased him; and it was a custom with him in his recommendatory letters, to affix a private mark, by which his correspondent was to judge how far he really meant to ask his friendship for the person presenting it. If this practice were general, which is indeed denied,† it robs his letters of this kind of a charm which otherwise eminently belongs to them; we mean the earnest and most amiable desire they evince to promote the views of all claiming his concern and influence.

Again, it cannot be denied that before his determination to go into exile, he had hesitated as to arming himself to prevent it; and it is certain that in his letters to Atticus and Terentia, when abroad, he reproachfully condemns his want of firmness in having forborne to do so; and yet as the reader is informed, he boasted on his return that he was governed in his withdrawal solely by a desire to save his country from the calamities which must have followed upon resistance.

"Te te patria testor," he exclaims, "penates patriique dii me vestrarum sedum templorumque causa, me propter salutem meorum civium, quæ mihi fuit semper mea carior vita, dimicationem cædemque fugisse." And in the speech

*Percussisti me de oratione prolata; cui vulnere ut scribis medere, si quid potes. Scripsi equidem olim ei, iratus quod ille prior scripserat. Sed ita compresseram, ut nunquam manaturam putarem. Quo modo exciderat nescio. Sed quia nunquam accidit ut cum eo verbo uno concertarem, et quia scripta mihi videtur negligentius quam cæteræ, puto esse probari non esse meam. Id si putas me posse sanari, cures velim; sin, plane perii minus labori.—*Ad. Att.* 3. xii.

† Middleton.

against Piso : "Alios ego vidi ventos, alias prospexi animo procellas, aliis impendentibus tempestatibus non cessi, sed his unum me pro omnium salute obtuli." In a letter to Atticus, however, notwithstanding this all absorbing love of country, he had not scrupled to implore him, should he think it essential to his restoration, to raise the mob in his favor : "Oro te si spes erit posse studiis bonorum auctoritate, multitudinem comparata, rem confeci des operam, et uno impetu perfungatur."

Finally, others of his letters, in a scarce less degree than those to Luceius Cæsar and Antony, which have been presented, show conclusively that he was not uncompromising in his attachment to the truth.

It has been said, since Dr. Middleton wrote, that there were few of the very celebrated men of antiquity whose characters are more open to discovery, than that of Cicero. Be this as it may, it would be difficult, if possible, to impart any thing of novelty to speculation upon his pretensions in oratory. We will therefore only say that in this particular we join that author and Quintilian in their most ardent praise. It may perhaps be proper, however, to lay before the reader the famous parallel of the Latin writer. It is not more familiar than imposing; and should in our judgment, have long since, in favor of the Roman, determined all question as to Quintilian's preference.

"Demosthenes is said to be more compacted, Cicero more copious; the one hems you close in; the other fights at weapon's length; the one studies still, as it were, to pierce by the keenness; the other to bear you down by the weight and fulness of his discourse. In the one there is nothing that can be curtailed; in the other nothing that can be added; the one owes more to application, the other to genius. But in the witty and the pathetic, which so strongly sway the affections, the Roman excels. But Cicero must in one thing yield to Demosthenes who lived before him, and formed great part of the Roman excellency; for to me it appears that Cicero, applying himself entirely to the imitation of the Greeks, united in this manner the force of De-

mosthenes, the copiousness of Plato and the sweetness of Isocrates. Not only did he extract what was excellent in these, but by the divine pregnancy of his own immortal genius, he found the means to produce out of himself most, or rather all, their characteristical beauties. For, to use an expression of Pindar, he does not fertilize his genius by making a collection of the waters that fall in rain from the clouds; but formed by the kind indulgence of Providence, he pours along in a resistless flood, that eloquence may make an experiment of all her powers in his person; for who can teach more instructively? or who can move more strongly? Did ever man possess such sweetness as to make you believe that you resign with willingness what he wrests by force; and though the judge is borne down by his power, yet he feels not he is forced along, but that he follows with pleasure. Nay, such is the commanding character of all he says, that you are ashamed to differ with his sentiments. He is not distinguished by the zeal of a counsel, but brings the conviction of whatever a witness or judge can say. Yet in the mean time all those excellencies of intense application, appear in him the easy flow of nature; and his eloquence though exquisitely and beautifully finished, appears to be but the happy turn of genius. It was therefore not without reason that with his contemporaries he was said to be the sovereign of the bar, but with posterity his reputation rose so high, that the name of Cicero appears not now to be the name of a man, but of eloquence herself. Let us, therefore, keep him in our eye, let him be our model; and let the man who has a strong passion for Cicero, know that he has made a progress in study.”*

As to the philosophical opinions of the orator, there can be no difficulty, though writers have not agreed in their efforts to ascertain his views upon the great points of religion. He was a disciple of the new Academy. The Academicks, as is known, derived their name from a grove near Athens, which had been consecrated to the memory of Academus, an Athenian hero.

* Quint. Inst. x. 1.

This grove was the scene of their lectures and disputations, and hence also the philosophy they taught was styled academical. The founder of this sect was Socrates, whose distinguishing character was that of a moral philosopher, and who as we may learn from Cicero, was the first to banish physics out of philosophy, which had before been directed to dark inquiries into nature and the structure of the universe, but was by him made subservient to virtue, inculcating the dangers of vice, and the natural difference of good and ill. The Socratic mode of searching after truth, was to affirm nothing, and examine every thing; and the disciples of this sect of Academicks were satisfied with *probability*, as all that a rational mind had to acquiesce in.*

In the school of Plato, who succeeded Socrates, the modesty of affirming was abandoned, and a regular system of opinions was formed, and delivered to his disciples as the peculiar discipline and tenets of the sect.† This mode continued for a long time afterwards until the Socratic doctrine was revived by Arcesilas, who taught that there was no certain knowledge of any thing in nature; nor any infallible criterion of truth and falsehood; that there was nothing so detestable as rashness, nothing so scandalous to a philosopher as to profess what was either false or unknown to him; that we ought to assert nothing dogmatically, but in all cases to suspend our assent, and instead of pretending to certainty, content ourselves with opinion grounded on probability.”‡ This last, to which Cicero was attached, was called the new Academy, to distinguish it from the Platonick or old.

Some have thought that Arcesilas was the founder of what they call the middle Academy; but we have no doubt that Middleton is right in rejecting this intervening school altogether. The distinction finds no countenance in any part of Cicero's works; and it is not probable had it existed, that he would have been silent when treating largely as

* Tusc. Quæ. 5. 4. Middleton.

† Academ. 1. 4. Ib.

‡ Ib.

he has, of the philosophy of the schools; and indeed he expressly speaks in his treatise on the Nature of the Gods, of the new Academy, as subsisting with that name down to his own time, as well under Carneades as Arcesilas.*

He had in the earlier part of his life adhered to the old or Platonick school, and it was not until advanced in age, that he became a disciple of the new. Dr. Middleton, after collecting from his writings some of the reasons which prompted him to the change, tells us he had another powerful motive in the peculiar fitness of the new school to his profession, as an orator, since by its "practice of disputing for and against every opinion of the other sects, it gave him the best opportunity of perfecting his oratorical faculty and acquiring a habit of speaking on all subjects;" and in some of his works Cicero himself speaks enthusiastically of the philosophy he cultivated, "as the parent of eloquence and copiousness; declaring that he owed all the fame of his eloquence, not to the mechanical rules of the rhetorician, but to the enlarged and generous principles of the Academy."†

The reader, in recalling his conduct when assailed by misfortune, will perhaps agree with us, that as is often the case, his philosophy displayed its results more happily in the cultivation of his mind than in the government of his affections. Indeed in all his greater sorrows it seems to have been utterly without power. We can hardly imagine a spirit more subdued than his, when bewailing the loss of Tulliola, when suffering in exile, or when waiting in anguish the return of Cæsar at Brundisium. No one, we believe, has questioned his want of equanimity; though Middleton appears to have thought with him that the defect was seen not so much in encountering, as in timorously anticipating, danger.‡

* Hanc Academiam novam appellant [Acad. 1. 13.] ut hæc in philosophia ratio contra omnia disserendi, nullamque rem aperte judicandi, profecta a Socrate, repetita ab Arcesila, confirmata a Carneade usque ad nostram vigeret ætatam.

De. Nat. Deo. 1. v.

† Tusc. Quæ. 2. 3. Orator sub init.

‡ Middleton l. 307, Ep. Fam. vi. xiv.

In forming an opinion of his views in regard to the great points of religion, it is difficult, if at all possible, to reconcile the doctrines he avows and sustains in some parts of his works, with the express contradictory declarations of many of his letters. If we credit the first, we must go with his modern historian and regard him as believing in the being of a God, a providence, the immortality of the soul, a future state of rewards and punishments, and the eternal difference of good and ill.* But on the other hand, if we take the positive unexplained opinions of his repeated letters, it is not possible to escape the conclusion that both the soul's immortal nature, and a state of future retribution, were equally disbelieved.† His indefatigable friend, the Doctor, exerts his utmost ingenuity in his attempt to extricate him from this dilemma; but we confess, that though anxious to be persuaded, he has left us still in doubt; the rather as he is here constrained to abandon the authority of the letters in which, to use his own words, we are to seek the genuine man without disguise or affectation. It is gratifying, however, that little doubt can exist, that whilst Cicero upheld the religion of Rome, he regarded it merely as an engine of state, and was far beyond the reach of its extraordinary though salutary superstition.

His learned biographer, though he extols his religion as of heavenly extraction, and as built upon the foundation of a God, a providence, an immortality, and though he speaks with confidence of the excellence to which one of so enlarged a mind and happy disposition had carried the natural law, is yet forced to concede that any thing like an assured belief of the great doctrines he ascribes to him was utterly inconsistent with the philosophy he cherished, which, as we have seen, admitted in its conclusions, nothing beyond a high degree of probability. Again, from a general view of the subject, the Doctor deduces the insufficiency of the natural law even as understood by Cicero,

* Tusc. Quæst. 14. xxvii. Cato Major 21. 2. 3. Frag. Lib. de Rep. 3. De Nat. Deo 3. 3. De Divin. 2. 72. De Amicitia.

† Ep Fam. 5. xvi. Ib. 21. Ib. 6. 3. Ib. 4. Ib. 21. Ad Atticum 4. x.

gifted as he was, and zealous as had been his pains and study in ascertaining it; and takes occasion sensibly and piously to point us to the divine light of the gospel as affording without the pains of searching, or danger of mistaking, not only the hope, but the assurance of happiness, and as making us not merely the believers but the heirs of immortality. Whatever, therefore, may have been Cicero's conceptions of a Deity, his providence, and of other points of religion, we have here disclosed a defect, striking directly at their efficacy, and which we doubt not was no less operative in his case than in that of others of the pagan world, equally as enlightened and far more virtuous. Indeed we have no hesitation in agreeing with Watson, sustained as we think he is by all experience, "that there never was any such thing as natural religion in the world; that is, there never were in the world just notions of the Supreme Being and his perfections and providence, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, but what have been borrowed from revelation."*

With regard to the manner in which Cicero met his terrible fate, writers have thoroughly differed. Quintilian, who in his estimate of his character, was not clear of the fault which has taken much of value from the learned, laborious and ingenious work of Middleton, seems to have thought that in the closing scene of his life there was a display of signal heroism;† whilst Plutarch speaks of it with con-

* Preface to Evid. Nat. Rel. and Christianity. There is the same thought in the third satire of Doctor Donne: we give it in the less rugged verse of Parnell.

"Is not religion (heaven descended dame,
As worthy all our soul's devoutest flame,
As moral virtue in her early sway,
When the best heathens saw by doubtful day?"

Cicero has given us an eloquent description of the law natural. "*Est quidem vera lex diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna. Huic legi non abrogari fas est, neque derogari in hac aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest, neque vero aut per senatum, aut per populum, solvi hac lege possumus. Neque si nulla erat Romæ scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam Tarquinius vim Lucretiæ attulit. Erat enim ratio profecta a rerum natura, et ad recte faciendum impellens, et a delicto avocans, quæ non tum denique incipit lex esse, cum scripta est, sed tum cum orta est: orta est autem cum mente divina.*"

† Quod probabit morte quoque ipsa, quam præstantissimo suscepit animo.

Quint. xii. i.

temptuous pity. "How deplorable," says the latter, "to see an old man for want of proper resolution, suffering himself to be carried about by his servants, endeavoring to hide himself from death, a messenger which nature would soon have sent him, and overtaken notwithstanding, and slaughtered by his enemies." This lofty indifference to death does well enough in print; and Plutarch might himself have resorted to suicide, the act he commends in Demosthenes. His remedy in practice, however, unless the mind be dethroned, is of no easy digestion; and we are not disposed to condemn in the sufferer conduct to which nature prompts us all; the rather if, as some believe, his religion pointed to "ills he knew not of."

SECTION IX.

WE now approach the public character of Cicero. "As to his political conduct," says Dr. Middleton, "no man was ever a more determined patriot, or warmer lover of his country than he."* We have no doubt whatever, that he did love his country, and would have rejoiced to have seen her flourishing in republican grandeur; but, unless we reject the plainest accumulated testimony, we can never admit the Doctor's claim of *determined* patriotism, for his favorite. There is no part of the public life of Cicero, after his consulship, to which we may point with pleasure unalloyed; saving only his spotless government when abroad. Throwing aside as anterior to the consulate, the folly, to say no more, of upholding the exorbitant grant of the Manilian law, an early and powerful cause, in our view, of the subsequent calamities, and conceding, as far as Middleton himself could desire, the purity and patriotism of his motive in that disastrous step, we have sought in vain a single justificatory reason for the union with Pompey on his return from the Mithridatick war; and are constrained upon Cicero's own admission to believe that that union had its origin in a desire to save his own darling authority; unmixed we fear, with any the least conviction, that Rome would reap advantage from their alliance. If, as we think, his object was to protect himself, and we cannot think otherwise, if his own letter may be credited, he must have determined to promote the views of his ally; otherwise, the support he sought, would have been of course withheld; and if he did so determine, must he not forego the high

* Middleton. 3. 359.

title of steadfast patriot, or retract his declaration that Pompey had no good intentions towards the state. But, admitting that at the moment of their union he did not distrust the designs of his ally, and that he might avail himself of his friendship for his own protection, without injury to his country, can a rational doubt exist, after the formation of a triumvirate, with purposes by his own innumerable admissions impious, and when, as he tells us, his friend was contemplating confusion and boundless dominion, that it was his duty if too fascinated by public distinction to withdraw, admitting that withdrawal could be vindicated, to strain all the vast power of his eloquence, in averting the ruin he predicted and denounced? But what in point of fact was his course at that important moment when all agree that the Roman constitution received its deadliest blow? Why he dissuades the union of Pompey with Cæsar. But that union matured in spite of him, in dread lest Cæsar shall ask his favor to an agrarian law, which he then very properly condemned, but which, by the way, he afterwards espoused; unlike to the really determined patriots, Cato and the rest, he fled from his post upon the consular bench, and left the outraged state, so far as his efforts and eloquence could avail, without a shield.

It is true that the triumvirs, by means of the large force at their command, had become so powerful, that in all human probability the best efforts of Cicero's eloquence, even if dauntlessly exerted, might not have availed; but this could not dispense with the duty of some attempt at least, to check the growth of a power fatal to the republic; nor is it possible to reconcile the neglect of such attempt with the determined patriotism with which his eulogist has sought to invest him. But if, conceding as we do, the difficulties of the times, and the great probability of defeat, we should not hesitate to approve an entire withdrawal from the public councils, [in which event, however, all pretensions to steadfast patriotism must have been surrendered, as that is tested by the toil and danger it encounters,] what ingenuity can devise, we will not say an adequate, but any apo-

logy, for the unmeasured subserviency to power after his exile? Then, as will be remembered, he was not merely passive, but tamely, and on all occasions, bowed to the sovereign nod of the triumvirate; lavishing, professedly with reluctance, but with no manly effort to avoid it, his authority and eloquence in fostering its power; repeatedly sustaining grants which, without zeal, would in all likelihood never have prevailed; flattering the usurpers in prose and verse; making a bawd of his eloquence; surrendering his just resentments in the defence of the vilest of mankind, his own mortal enemies, at the mere beck of Pompey: and all this because others, who ought to have been leaders, were wanting in duty; because an opposition to which he had contributed no one effort, was unavailing, and because having done and suffered much for his country, he thought himself at liberty to consider what was due to gratitude, his more private connections, and the honor of his brother; at the same time too, acknowledging in his letters to Atticus, whence we are to gather the undisguised opinions of the genuine Cicero, that the schemes then forming, and whose success he was advancing, were designed for no earthly purpose save the destruction of the commonwealth.*

The apologist of Cicero, in his attempt to relieve him from this most serious charge, tells us that "it was the observation of his favorite, which long experience had confirmed to him, that none of the popular and ambitious who aspired to extraordinary commands and to be leaders in the republic, ever chose to obtain their ends from the people till they had first been repulsed by the senate."† "This," says the Doctor, "was verified by all their civil dissensions from the Gracchi to Cæsar; so that when he saw men of this spirit at the head of the government, who by the splendor of their lives and actions had acquired an ascendant over the populace, it was his constant advice to the senate to gain them by gentle compliances, and to gratify their thirst of power, by voluntary grants of it, as the best way

* Ad. Atticum. li. xvii. † De Consular. Provin. xvi. Phil. v. xviii.

to moderate their ambition, and reclaim them from desperate counsels. He declared contention to be no longer prudent than while it either did service, or at least no hurt; but when faction was grown too strong to be withstood, that it was time to give over fighting, and nothing left but to extract some good out of the ill, by mitigating that power by patience, which they could not reduce by force, and conciliating it if possible, to the interests of the state.* This was what he advised, and what he practised; and it will account in a great measure for those parts of his conduct which are the most liable to exception on the account of that complaisance which he is supposed to have paid at different times to the several usurpers of illegal power.†

In answer to this argument, which indeed the Doctor does not appear to have thought triumphant, we would observe, that if we take as a guide the letters of Cicero deploring the evils of the times, we will find that though he disapproved the uncompromising patriotism of Cato, he was yet so far from thinking it unwise to contend, that he implores a young friend, Curio, “incessantly to think upon the virtues which that generous patriot must possess, who in such a general depravation of manners *gloriously* purposes to vindicate the ancient dignity and liberties of his oppressed country,”‡ or, if it be admitted that he did think it unwise to contend, and thus exasperate a power too strong for them, how can we approve his constant efforts in extending that power, irresistible as he already believed it?—Why, says the argument, if the senate, unmindful of its dignity, would meanly abandon its authority and neglect its duty, in gratifying their thirst of power by voluntary grants of it, then the ambition of the chiefs would be moderated, and themselves be reclaimed from desperate counsels. What did Dr. Middleton, or what did Cicero understand to be desperate counsels? Surely, these at first glance are discernible, in a design upon the ruin of the republic, to reach unlimited dominion. If such were the design, and nobody ever doubted it, could Cicero imagine that surren-

* *Pro Balb.* xxvii. *De Offic.* i. i.

† *Middleton*, 3. 365.

‡ *Ep. Fam.* 2. v.

der at discretion was the mode to avert it; or could he have believed that ambition, which grows by what it feeds on, was to be appeased by appliances short of its demands?—In a word, his doctrine, as pressed by his friend inculcates in effect a slavish submission to prosperous faction howsoever atrocious, is in nothing recommended by the unworthy hope it suggests, that patience under power will mitigate its exercise, and is of all conceivable doctrines the most hateful to a determined patriot.*

We have before intimated a doubt of Cicero's sincerity in the apologetical letter to Lentulus, which related to that part of his course as a statesman now under consideration, so far as he professed to be satisfied that his own conduct was sustained by the principles which that letter discloses. This doubt, built upon the consciousness of unworthy compliances which others of his letters betray, is entirely dissipated when we reflect upon his peculiar situation at the time, and upon the strong reasons personal to himself which must have naturally prompted him to seek a shelter in the protection of the powerful. It will be recollected that the misfortune of his exile had in a great degree, if not altogether, grown out of the connivance of Pompey, and the positive co-operation of Cæsar with Clodius. Had his subserviency been as great before his exile as afterwards; in other words, had his union with Pompey then included Cæsar, there can be no question that the calamity might have been averted. Not firm enough of purpose, however, on his return to withdraw, a course which he approved and contemplated, and to which his ease and professed principles invited him; and with no disposition to join the patriot Cato and the rest, in their unbending efforts to save

*The egregious folly of Cicero's pretended gentle remedies, is clear, not only from the known nature of ambition, but in the particular case of Cæsar, from indisputable historical evidence. It is said in Middleton, on the authority of a writer of admitted distinguished impartiality and correctness, that one of the greatest of the many unusual favors to Cæsar, instead of satisfying him, served only to raise his hopes and demands still higher. "*Egit cum tribunis pleb—ut absenti sibi—petitio secundi consulatus daretur. Quod ut adeptus est, altiora jam meditans et spei plenus, nullum largitionis, aut officiorum in quemquam genus publice privatimque omisit.*"

the republic, there was no other alternative but to assume a scarce practicable neutral attitude, or to yield as he did thoroughly yield, to the will of the triumvirate. To this last course, if we have been sound in examining the argument of his apologist, no motive of patriotism could by any possibility have impelled him; and we are therefore left with no other conclusion, than that his devotion to these enemies of the state was induced by his sense of their power to protect him, and by horror of the calamity he had sustained.

Doctor Middleton himself does not deny the compliances of Cicero at this time; nor does he contend that they were without indignity and dishonor, but represents him as forced to submit "to the iniquity of the times, and to his engagements with Pompey and Cæsar." We will not stop to inquire how far it is consistent with the character of a determined patriot to succumb to any force; but we cannot, for the soul of us, surmise the absolute necessity there was to confront it at all; unless such may be seen in the duty which this character of patriot enjoins; nor could we imagine, had not Cicero himself told us otherwise, that the option of withdrawal was denied to him. With regard to his engagements they could have been contracted with but one of two objects; either with the sole view to protect himself, or with the double view to personal safety and advantage to the state. That the first was secured we know, but can a rational mind believe that the safety of the state was, or could be promoted by adherence to men, whose power was fatal to its freedom; especially when instead of curbing that power, his eloquence was constantly lavished in feeding it. If he had made an effort not known to us, other than that the folly of which we think manifest, to wean the triumvirs from their flagitious purposes, or in the language of the argument, to conciliate their power to the interests of the state, it is perfectly certain that such effort was ineffectual. Was it not then an imperious demand of honor, to dissolve all contract with men aiming at supremacy in a government of laws, and if,

as was probable, continued opposition would have been unavailing, should not integrity have taught him, if not resistance, at least to withdraw? There is no want of charity in supposing that he declined to retire, either from dread of the triumvirate, or from passionate fondness for that sort of notoriety which his eloquence and participation in affairs could not fail to secure; for how is it possible, without imputing some such motive, to believe that he could submit to the alternative he writes of, "that he was under the sad necessity either tamely to yield to the sentiments of those few who led the republic, or of joining in a weak and fruitless opposition."* No one, where such was the alternative, knew better than Cicero what course to pursue; he had already written to his friend announcing his intention, for this very cause to withdraw, and has in one of his orations extolled as worthy of unfading glory, the conduct of Metellus, in a dilemma exactly like to the one he deplores. Of that Roman he tells us, "*De civitate decedere quam de sententia maluit.*"

After the fate of Crassus, the subserviency of Cicero to the remaining usurpers, continued with no diminution, until his departure from Rome for his government of Cilicia. As the head of a province, we may contemplate him with highest pleasure and unmixed admiration. Here all that enlightened wisdom, with the purest justice, could effect in healing the wounds of unbridled oppression was attempted, not only quickly, but with an inflexibility of purpose, which neither gold nor the prayers of friendship could dissuade. Here, the desire of Atticus and Brutus, and even of Pompey, the great ruler of his affections, unless sustained by equity, could in nothing prevail. Possessed of a power seldom controlled, and in the enjoyment at pleasure of regal state,—vigor, moderation, justice and clemency marked his rule; the happiness of thousands was secured by kindness equal to his wisdom, and Rome beheld the extraordinary spectacle of a proconsular administration, with no stain from rapine, and in every way beneficent.

* Ep. Fam.

On his return to Italy, as we have before said, the desire of war was universal; and the hour had arrived, abundantly to reveal to him, if indeed he had ever had a doubt, the vile purposes of his friends. The posture of affairs could have in nothing surprised him; as with the precision of a prophet he had long predicted the calamities now menacing the empire. And here we cheerfully admit, that he did with his whole heart display the love of country which we concede. He thought, as he has told us, that whichever party was triumphant, tyranny must ensue, and therefore with untiring zeal made the utmost effort to mediate a peace. But even here, though animated by love of country to avert the perils he foresaw, acting upon principles, the fallacy of which we have attempted to make clear, and with a full knowledge we doubt not, that Cæsar aimed not only at the ruin of his rival but at thorough supremacy, was it the part of a determined patriot, after a failure of his efforts to divert Pompey from a struggle, to counsel as he did, unqualified surrender without the shadow of resistance, to all the demands, odious or otherwise, of Cæsar? With a preference for Pompey, as well as his cause, howsoever bad he may have deemed it, would a determined patriot, when that chief was in arms with the power and hearts of all the honest in his favor, and when the Roman senate regarded the triumph of his rival as fatal to the republic, have, rather than try the experiment of resistance, preferred the most unjust conditions to the justest war?*

Mr. Fox in one of his speeches professed to have been converted by the tragic scenes in France, from his youthful abhorrence of this sentiment of Cicero to a belief of its manifest wisdom. "He could hardly frame to himself," he said, "the condition of a people in which he would not rather covet to continue, than advise them to fly to arms and to seek redress through the unknown miseries of a revolution." We are certainly not wanting in admiration of this great man's wisdom, and combat any conclusion of his

* *Ad acem hortari non desino, quæ vel injusta utilior est, quam justissimum bellum.—Ad Atticum, vii. xiv.*

illuminated mind with proper awe; but we cannot see in what way his human reasoning can be made to vindicate Cicero, as the advice which the latter gave, to secure a peace at whatever cost, did not spring from his horror of the miseries of revolution, admitting as we do that he felt it, but confessedly from his sense of the superior strength of Cæsar.* Had he deemed the contest equal, though preferring peace, and with the worst opinion of Pompey's cause, he would yet, rather than give up every thing, have risked a struggle. Besides, the sacred character he ascribed to the conspiracy of Brutus, with his assurance that had it been revealed to him, his whole soul would have been given to it, shows abundantly what calamities he would have hazarded to change the condition of a people; and again, the inexorable war which he urged against Antony, when he found him disposed to play the despot, proves to demonstration, that in his practice, if not his judgment, there were crises at which the fiercest civil contention was commendable. Indeed in this latter war, as the reader will remember, he was not only from the very outset its advocate, but was in all the stages of it the determined enemy of peace; and though the avowed cause of his hostility to all accommodation was, that Antony would keep no terms, no rational doubt can exist, that his warlike counsels were in a great degree induced by a conviction, that though much blood might be spilled, the power of the consuls and Cæsar would yet ultimately crush his own and the public enemy; nor whilst ascribing it for the purposes of the argument, do we condemn this motive.

It is scarcely necessary to show what Cicero thought of the probable conditions to which he advised so unlimited assent. We desire the reader however, to recall the eloquent denunciation of Cæsar, in the letter to Atticus already presented to him, and now ask his attention to another in which he will find Cicero exclaiming: "What can be more impudent? He has held his government ten

* Ad. Att. vii. xiv.

years, not granted to him by the senate, but extorted by violence and faction;* the full term has expired, not of the law, but of his licentious will; but allow it to be law, it is now decreed that he must have a successor; he refuses, and says have some regard to me. Let him first show his regard to us; will he pretend to keep an army longer than the people ordained, and contrary to the will of the senate." Hence we may infer that if as the writer desired, Cæsar had been gratified, the authority of the senate was in effect annihilated, and his own counsel necessarily suicidal.

There is no doubt that a short time after, many of the best in Rome were most anxious for a peace, though few, if any, save Cicero, ever dreamed of a surrender without a struggle. This desire of peace was shown by the manner in which some propositions of Cæsar were met by a grand council of the chiefs at Capua. Cæsar's conditions were, that Pompey should go to his government of Spain, that his new levies should be dismissed, and his garrisons withdrawn, in which case he would himself deliver up his provinces, the farther Gaul to Domitius, the hither to Considius, and sue for the consulship in person, without requiring the privilege of absence. These conditions Cicero tells us were embraced with the addition of one preliminary article, that Cæsar should recall his troops from the towns, which he had seized beyond his own jurisdiction; so that the senate might return to the city and settle the whole affair with honor and freedom.† Favonius alone, appears on this occasion to have been against all conditions; and it is somewhat surprising that Cato did not join him. That Roman, however, seems to have thought the ample concessions of Cæsar well worth the compromise of dignity which his conditions implied, and now clearly proved that his obstinacy was not of that senseless and destructive character, which Cicero would fain have us believe; and it is not easy with patience to read a letter to Atticus‡ in which he

* No man had been more instrumental than our orator in the prolongation of this very command.

† Ep. Fam. xvi. xii. Ad Atticum. vii. xiv.

‡ Ibid. vii. xv.

is told that all rejected the advice of Favonius, and that Cato himself, would now rather live a slave than fight. There would have been less injustice in this ungenerous imputation, had Cato, at the outset, joined him in unresisting obedience to insolent and *unmitigated* demands.

But whilst we think that the submission to Cæsar's power, and the counsel it induced, can never be reconciled with that kind of patriotism which Dr. Middleton has claimed for Cicero, we repeat our belief that in his ultimate determination to join with Pompey, there was a display of firmness rarely discernible in his actions, and certainly not promised by the admitted irresolution which preceded it. In this determination, however, if we may judge from his own declaration, gratitude, more than patriotism, was the prompting cause.* But be this as it may, if as we before said, he was not by some means assured that he could not offend the generous Cæsar beyond the measure of his clemency, and did in sincerity believe that the cause of his friend was the weaker, the warmest commendation was not undeserved; and as to the protracted irresolution prior to his flight, it is in our view more the subject of pity than of blame; for though he thought Pompey would prove the juster, modester and honester king,† yet the task of fighting for a king of any sort, could have been in no way grateful, and it was without doubt a most ample tribute to gratitude, especially if he believed Cæsar the stronger, to abandon a neutrality, safe so far as that general was concerned, and incur by an union with his enemy the anger of a power which, if successful, might have destroyed him. Here, however, all praise, even with proviso, must cease.

Although Cicero believed that Pompey, if successful, would conquer after the manner and pattern of Sylla, with much cruelty and blood, it was also his belief that if he failed, the very name of the Roman people would be extinguished.‡ What then was the duty of a determined pa-

* *Hominem (Pompeium) sum secutus privato officio, non publico; tantumque apud me grati animi fidelis memoria valuit.*—*Pro Marcello*. 5.

† *Ad Atticum* x. vii.

‡ *Ibid.* xi. vii.

patriot when enlisted in his quarrel? Surely to adhere to his party so long as it had power to contend. Well, what was in point of fact the value of his long delayed adhesion? Why piqued, as we have seen, when forbidden to talk of peace, for to the last he cherished a baseless hope of accommodation, and offended at the neglect of his counsels, instead of warm co-operation with his friend, he walks dejectedly about his camp, makes even what he fancied to be ruinous the subject of his railleries; at the very first blow, abandons the cause; and tremblingly invokes the mercy of a man whose success, if we believe him, was incompatible not merely with the happiness, but the very name of the Roman people. But admitting that the disastrous field of Pharsalia was enough to appal the true and the brave, though on the firm soul of Cato and a thousand others it had no such effect, how could a determined patriot wait at Brundisium, the mercy of the conqueror, when the cause of his country was flourishing in Africa, and when the power of its friends was greater than that of Cæsar? Why, says Cicero, I did not think that our country ought to be defended by barbarous and treacherous auxiliaries; and yet in the letter urging this excuse, betraying the utmost consciousness of its shallowness, acknowledging his fear that he would lose the respect of the worthy, and withal the torment he endured in the reflection, that even should the combatants in Africa be conquered their fall would be glorious.* By what magic process Dr. Middleton could transmute actual desertion, and suppliant waiting upon the destroyer of the republic, into determined patriotism, we have not acumen to discover.

But supposing, what to be sure is in the nature of things impossible, that a firm patriot could anxiously seek an opportunity of repose under a despotism he abhorred, and this too, when there was every encouragement to contend; is it conceivable that such a patriot could deign to flatter the despot with highest praise and increase of honors? and yet both these, in an eminent degree, did Cicero. So far from

* Ad Atticum. x. vii.

contemplating Cæsar as the extinguisher of the Roman name, we repeat that if we take as a guide the speeches for Ligarius Marcellus and Deiotarus, we cannot regard his rule other than beneficent. Indeed an entire history of panegyric could scarce present applause more inflated than that of Cicero.* To what can this be imputed? Some incline to pardon the flattery of the speech for Marcellus, as it breathes a fervent, though artfully expressed desire, that Cæsar would restore the republic. For ourselves, we had no disposition to enlarge upon it, and should have been altogether silent in relation to it, but for this claim with which it is utterly at war, and upon which Cicero himself, with all his voracity of pretension did not at this time insist; for he repeatedly admits, that it was his intention to live quietly as a slave, that he was taking all pains even with artifice to conciliate his ruler, and all those in any degree of favor with him, that it was his part to be content with what was allowed him, and that he who could not submit to this, ought to have suffered death.† Nor will he leave us any doubt as to the nature of his flattery; for he expressly informs us that it was scandalous to flatter the man under whom he ought to be ashamed even to live.‡ In short, unless we totally overlook his own repeated acknowledgments, as well as ample evidence derived elsewhere, we must, however reluctantly, deny to him any the least merit at this time, other than that which may be seen in the sincerest sorrow for the ruin of the republic; and even this, it may well be

* It appears from a letter to Sulpicius, then governor of Greece, that there was one senator and only one who, in this affair of Marcellus, deserved the title which Dr. Middleton claims for the orator. "What the senate did," says Cicero, "was this: upon the mention of Marcellus by Piso, his brother Caius having thrown himself at Cæsar's feet, they all rose up and went forward in a supplicating manner towards Cæsar. In short, this day's work appeared to me so *decent* that I could not help fancying that I saw the image of the old republic reviving. [*The whole senate on their knees to an usurper, the reader will probably think a strange symptom of reviving freedom.*] When all, therefore, who were asked their opinion before me had returned thanks, excepting Volcatius, [*for he declared that he would not do it, though he had been in Marcellus's place,*] I, as soon as I was called upon, changed my mind, Cæsar's magnanimity and the laudable zeal of the senate getting the better of my resolution.—*Ep. Fam.* 4. 4.

† *Ep. Fam.* 9. xvi. & xvii.

‡ *Ad. Atticum.* xiii. xxviii.

feared, was in no slight degree mixed with regret at the loss of his own loved authority.*

It had been well for his good name had he or his apologists left mankind at liberty to attribute his applause of the usurper to an impulse of the mother of the virtues; for, putting aside the higher claims of country, where was there ever a larger or a juster debt of gratitude than that of Tully to Cæsar? What was his condition when made the object of the clemency his immortal eloquence has embalmed?—Cæsar, at his rupture with Pompey, did not ask his active friendship, and would have been content with his neutrality. To secure even that boon, the mighty Roman almost stooped. Whatever there was of value, however, in Cicero's adhesion, was given to Pompey; and though after no very warlike fashion it is true, he did put himself in a way to fight against Cæsar, who yet in the midst of his triumphs, disdaining revenge, saved him from despair and met him not merely with honor, but affection. But his apologists ascribe his flattery to the great height of Cæsar's power, will have no reasonable man to blame it, though he tells us that it was not only blamable but scandalous, and they will not hear of gratitude to a tyrant; nor will Cicero himself permit us to think that that feeling, at all times so extolled, had been here allowed to operate; for after the death of the usurper, we seek in vain in all his allusions to him, the godlike virtues once so eloquently painted; the old denunciations are then resumed, and had he been a guest, he tells us, at the glorious feast of the ides of March, no one of its dainties should have escaped untouched.†

* We can scarcely doubt that, added to his dislike to tyranny, Cicero found an abundant source of joy in the assassination of Cæsar, as he believed, and with justice, that if followed by a restoration of the republic, his own vast control in the state would be revived; and it is discoverable from his letters, when he found that no such result would spring from it, how deeply anxious he was to recover his importance. For this purpose he courted the conspirators, Antony, Octavius, Dolabella and Hirtius, in what fashion, the letter to Antony has told us. This, his too zealous friends excuse, and contend that he did it to keep the parties balanced, and that the country might regain her liberty; but we fear that Mr. Guthrie is right in treating such defence as despicable; and perhaps these pages, should the reader have had patience to get through with them, sustain that view.

† Ep. Fam. Ad. Cassium. Ad. Trebonium.

We have now reached the last stage of this far from grateful inquiry. Here, though we are free to admit that when Antony had taken the field, the zeal and eloquence of Cicero were ardently exerted in arming the state and stimulating its energies against him, and that the last struggle was in a great degree kept alive and invigorated by his counsels; and but for the impolitic demands of his eulogists, would have gladly overlooked a perhaps pardonable want of firmness before, and for some time after, his irreconcilable breach with the public enemy; yet we cannot forget that in an investigation of this kind we are combating a claim which, if conceded, would elevate him, in point of patriotism, to a rank from which in truth he was immeasurably distant: we mean the rank of Cato. Unlike to the rest of mankind, however, Dr. Middleton saw no sanctity in that rank, and did not scruple in extolling his idol to depress the noble Roman. Well, what was the course of Cicero on the excitement growing out of Cæsar's funeral, the product of Antony's perfidious and fatal eloquence; a course which this argument compels us to subject to a test confessedly stern? Why to avoid danger he left his post. Plutarch imputes his withdrawal to fear, and tells the truth when he adds, that there was great and particular cause to dread Antony,—“for being sensible of his weight in the administration, and of his strong attachment to Brutus, he could hardly bear his presence. Besides there had long been some jealousy and dislike between them on account of the dissimilarity of their lives.”

Some time after Cicero's retirement, there was to be a meeting of the senate, and he set out towards Rome; but on the road received intelligence from various quarters that the city was filled with soldiers, that the veterans talked desperately of all those who did not favor them, and that certain armed men were provided for some attempt at Tusculum.* This fixed him in a determination not to venture to the senate, and to withdraw from a city where he had not only flourished, he says, with the greatest, but lived even as

* Ad Atticum xv. iv. Ibid. v. Ibid. viii.

a slave with some dignity;* and now it was that he left Italy for Greece, but checked, as the reader will remember, by adverse winds, and learning good news of Antony, (for Plutarch tells us that he did not choose to be without news,) he returned, thanking the elements for preserving him from infamy, delivered his first philippic, and again frightened, withdrew to Naples, where he wrote his second, which cost him his life, but which was not pronounced in the senate. Nor do we hear of him again upon the consular bench until Antony withdrew, or until, in the language of Middleton, the road was open to him, and there were no troops from which he could apprehend any danger. Now, though we have before said that there was in all probability a very imminent danger to be dreaded, and feel no desire to censure his abundant caution, yet we can never think that a fearless statesman would have so far listened to its suggestions, as to desert his post at a moment when the government and laws were sustaining shameful violation, and when there might have been need of his determined admonition, in keeping the high order to which he was attached, and which events soon proved not unworthy of his care, firm in the support of its dignity and authority. Nor can Cicero avail himself of the plea that the firmest patriot may with propriety retire when the danger is manifest, and when his life would be the forfeit without advantage to his country; for it is clear, that his own idea of any such extreme peril was the result only of suspicion, that he had the strongest doubts whether his Grecian visit could be vindicated, and was apprehensive that it would be interpreted, as in point of fact it was interpreted, as a desertion.† The crisis, therefore, was not such as even to satisfy himself that his retreat was defensible. We repeat that we have here applied the sternest test, and should not have arraigned the patriotism of Cicero in any part of the last great struggle of republican Rome, but for this fond, and we will add hurtful, claim of his infatuated admirers, who by presenting him to the world as a model of all human excellency, have

* Ad. Atticum. xv. v. † Ibid. xiv. xx.

prompted the just advocates of truth, as well as the capacious and malignant, to a scrutiny in the examination of his life, which could not fail to have brought into view slight stains and graver defects, which succeeding ages might well have been content to overlook, in consideration of his surpassing power as an orator and scholar, his many admirable virtues, and the inestimable treasure he has bequeathed to mankind in his immortal page.

In fine, it may with truth be said of Cicero, as has been said of an English churchman, that "want of firmness was the 'vicious mole' in his character. Cranmer felt that he could not stand erect in the independence of an uncompromising spirit before his sovereign, and was therefore reduced into an unworthy compliance with all the capricious and vicious mandates of that sovereign's will; nor could it be alledged in palliation of his first deviation from the strict path of rectitude, that it was the unavoidable result of circumstances; for Cranmer was not and could not be forced into the archiepiscopal chair; and therefore voluntarily entailed upon himself all the moral consequences of his elevation."* As Cranmer to his king, so and from the same cause was Cicero subservient to the triumvirs, and thus

"With the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery or fortune's star,
His *virtues* else, (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,)
Shall, in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault."—*Hamlet*.

Posterity can have no reluctance in conceding to Cicero very many of the great essential qualities of a statesman. He had wisdom, foresight, learning, vast experience, eloquence and love of country; but this most ample concession loses much of its value, if, as we have attempted to show, he was wanting in firmness,—that crowning attribute, without which, in tumultuous times, the rest are comparatively useless. Moreover, it is in our judgment his misfortune that the historian when conceding many of the qualities we have named, must often do so at the expense

of far nobler virtues. For example, we cannot escape the conclusion that his wisdom must, at first view, have taught him the fatal tendencies of the Manilian law. Was it not the obvious dictate, we will not say of enlightened statesmanship, but of ordinary sense, that there was danger in the creation of a power absolutely monarchical, in an empire professing to be free; and till then but for similar grants uniformly republican? We speak of course of that part of its history after the expulsion of Tarquin. Can any one believe that it was the honest conviction of Cicero, that the perplexing war in the east called for a power like to that, to which Rome never had recourse but at a moment of stern and last necessity? What thought the wise and virtuous even of the power which this act was designed to enlarge? The historian has left us no doubt as to their views and fears, and surely none can be juster or more obvious!—"These unusual grants," said they, "were the cause of all the misery that the republic had suffered from the proscriptions of Marius and Sylla, who by a perpetual succession of extraordinary commands, were made too great to be controlled by the authority of the laws; that though the same abuse of power was not to be apprehended from Pompey, yet the thing itself was pernicious, and contrary to the constitution of Rome; that the equality of democracy required that the public honors should be shared alike by all who were worthy of them; that there was no other way to make men worthy, and to furnish the city with a number and choice of experienced commanders; and if, as was said, there were none at that time fit to command but Pompey, the true reason was because they would suffer none to command but him."*

Assuming then that Cicero did feel the weight of the admonition which these views suggest, (for beyond all doubt his deep knowledge of the Roman story told him its force,) to what can we impute his neglect of it? Not to a want of firmness; for at that time there was no overgrown power acting upon him, and for aught we know, his sup-

port of the law was in every way voluntary. Not to the iniquity of the times, or to personal engagements; for by neither is it pretended that he was governed. Hence there is strong reason to fear that in promoting a power clearly inordinate, he was in truth animated by the selfish motive with which he was taxed; the ardent desire, in a word, of of the sovereign dignity. But grant that in this first great public act of his life he was honest, can we concede that he was wise? Beside himself, Cæsar was the only great man who upheld this law, and nobody doubts but that he befriended it because it was unwise, and smoothed his way to the uncontrollable power he meditated. But could any doubt of its folly have existed, it was soon dispelled by no less a test than the fall of the republic.

Doctor Middleton in speaking of the Manilian law observes, that Cicero might *probably* have been convinced of the safety and expediency of the grant; yet in animadverting upon the motives of Cæsar in sustaining it, he clearly shows that if we may relieve his favorite from the imputation of dishonesty, there is still need of stronger reasons than exist, as we think, to save him from that of folly, "for this," says the Doctor, "is the common effect of breaking through the barrier of the laws, by which many states have been ruined; when from a confidence in the abilities and integrity of some eminent citizen, they invest him on pressing occasions with extraordinary powers for the common benefit and defence of the society; for though power so entrusted, may in particular cases be of singular service, and sometimes even necessary; yet the example is always dangerous, furnishing a perpetual pretence to the ambitious and ill designing to grasp at every prerogative which had been granted at any time to the virtuous, till the same power which would save a country in good hands, oppresses it at last in bad."*

We have already in terms of unmeasured applause spoken of the statesmanship of Cicero when consul, and as

* Middleton l. 136.

the head of a province; and the inquiry into his firmness from the return of Pompey up to the last effort of the republic, so far embraced an examination of his claims to the attribute of wisdom, during the same period, as perhaps to dispense with reflections here. We may remark, however, that if the view there taken be sound, his connexion with the triumvirate, and subsequent subserviency to Cæsar, was the product of ambition and fear, and not the dictate of the wisdom we concede.

Again, if, as perhaps we ought, we admit the authority of Plutarch, sustained as we believe it is by the old historians without exception, Cicero in his entire relations with Octavius, was prompted by motives in a great degree, if not exclusively, personal. This writer after telling us that the pretended reason of their alliance was to be found in a dream of Cicero, and in the fact that the boy was born in his consulate, adds, "that the leading motive was hatred of Antony and avidity for glory; for he hoped to throw the weight of Octavius into the scale of the commonwealth. Hence Brutus in his letters to Atticus, expressed his indignation against him, that as through fear of Antony, he paid his court to young Cæsar, it was plain that he took not his measures for the liberty of his country, but to obtain a gentler master for himself."* Then follows the charge that he had promoted Cæsar's views when aiming at the sovereign dignity, only combatted by the letter which we have given, but which, it will be remembered, is supposed to be spurious. If the charge of Plutarch be true, there was the grossest want of integrity in the course of Cicero; but supposing the motives in the alliance to have been mixed, and that he did honestly believe that Rome might reap advantage from the employment of Octavius, could a belief that it was proper in every possible manner to enhance his importance, have had its origin in wisdom? We have said that by his talents and the charm of his name and money,

* Brutus, as the reader knows, did not confine the display of his indignation to Atticus.

he had in fact made himself so strong that it was in all probability wise to secure his co-operation with the state, in obstructing the designs of its unquestioned enemy. An attempt to divest him of all control over the troops he had secured, would, in all probability, have deprived the state of their power; but we repeat, that to obviate this there was no necessity for a profusion of honors to a child. Such honors were in reality altogether gratuitous, as without them, at the mere suggestion of Cicero, and impelled by hatred of his rival he was on his way to the conflict. Why then exalt him to the high dignity of the senate? and why decree that in soliciting any future magistracy the same regard be had to him as would have been shown by law had he been quæstor the year before? Cicero himself deemed an apology for his decree necessary; but this apology, if we are right in the view we have taken of it, was in irreconcilable conflict with his powerful distrust of Cæsar scarce a month before he made it. He had written to Atticus that if Octavius should come into power, the acts of Cæsar would have a firmer sanction than they had in the temple of Tellus, and in short he in every way distrusted him. Where then, even admitting that it was wise to grant him a command at all, was the wisdom of stimulating by increase of gratuitous honors, the young man's thirst of a power which he believed would be abused, and to the attainment of which these very honors must of necessity have contributed. Doctor Middleton tells us that there was no way of checking Antony so effectual as by "employing Octavius and his troops, and though the entrusting him with that commission would throw a *dangerous* power into his hands, yet it would be controlled by the equal power and superior authority of the consuls, who were joined with him in the same command."* In estimating the wisdom of Cicero, supposing him, as we do not, to have been sincere, we must not lose sight of the fact, that with fearless assurance he had pledged his reputation that there was no danger whatever in the commission to Cæsar. But

* Middleton 3.

take the motive alledged by the Doctor, though discarded by himself, and admit that he apprehended danger, and found a safeguard in the joint power and superior authority of the consuls; the employment of Cæsar in that view of it must have been regarded as called for by necessity; in other words, the exigency must have outweighed the danger. To meet the exigency then, was all that wisdom could have taught; the grant of a command did meet it; and therefore, all further honors were of course supererogatory, and could not fail to strengthen the power, the danger of which the argument presumes to have been contemplated. A wise statesman would have granted the command itself, with reluctance, had there been danger in it; a wise statesman yielding to necessity, yields so far, and so far only, as the necessity demands; in short a wise statesman does not aggravate a danger, it is his duty to avert; and believing Cicero, as we do, to have been wise, we cannot impute a conduct at war with all wisdom, except to some such motive as history, uncontradicted but by his own testimony, and that of doubtful character, has suggested.

These observations apply to that part of his course anterior to his supposed co-operation with Cæsar in his impious attempt upon the consulate. Upon the question which his learned though biased apologist has raised in his behalf, resting his argument upon the controverted letter, we forbear to determine. It may be said, however, that if Cicero, knowing as he did know, that the republic was lost through Cæsar's traitorous neglect to follow up the victory near Modena, did nevertheless press his elevation to the consulship, or did not even at the hazard of his life, with the utmost stretch of his majestic eloquence oppose it, no past service could expiate that crime, and even his fate, tragic as it was, might almost be regarded without a sigh. But here, most happily for his honor, there is a "loop on which may hang a doubt."

Finally, should we have reached just conceptions of Cicero's character, and we have spared no pains to do so, we may conclude generally, that his religion, even as ex-

toll'd by his enthusiastic admirer, was destitute of all that could give to it true efficacy as a guide, or power of solace as a fountain of hope; that his philosophy, excellent in its precepts, was yet in the government of many of his affections eminently worthless; that wise as a statesman, ambition and fear more frequently than wisdom were his guides; that as an author, the test of human scrutiny for ages sustained, his splendid fame must live forever; that as an orator, with richest gifts and deep and varied learning, he joined an eloquence perhaps unequalled in any age; and that with a number of admirable virtues, there was in his disposition and manners a benevolence and mild grace, leading to much that is commendable in his more private relations, and delightful in his intercourse with mankind in general. Unless, however, we discard the clearest, most powerful and plentiful testimony, and that principally his own, we are compelled to deny to him not only the attribute of patriotism in the high order of it claimed for him, but all the sterner elements of moral greatness; yet while we do so in homage to what we deem to be the truth, and have in obedience to its mandates chastened the admiration so justly springing from the illustrious qualities we concede, we are not of those who, in estimating the pretensions of this renowned Roman, would overlook the tumult and perplexity of the times at which he lived, or churlishly refuse, in some degree, to mingle compassion with our blame.

H 404,85

ERRATA.

In Section I, for "questor and questorship," read, quæstor and quæstorship.

In page 14, line 10, for "noble birth," read, good descent.

In " 18, " 13, omit "which we do not admit."

In " 20, " 26, for "its," read, their.

In " 21, " 16, for "Cicero," read, his.

In " 24, " 30, for "Cicilians," read, Sicilians.

In " 28, " 22, for "plebian," read, plebeian.

In " 49, " 21, for "displayed," read, announced.

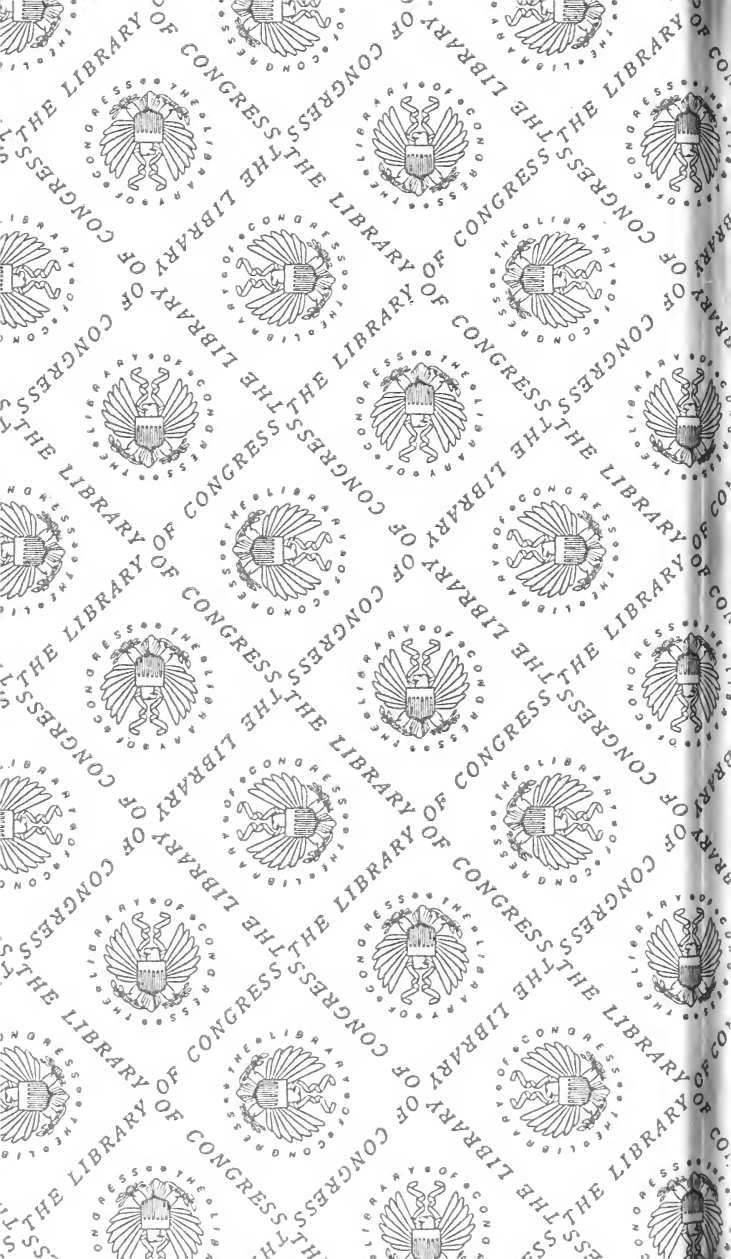
In " 61, " 7, for "government," read, state.

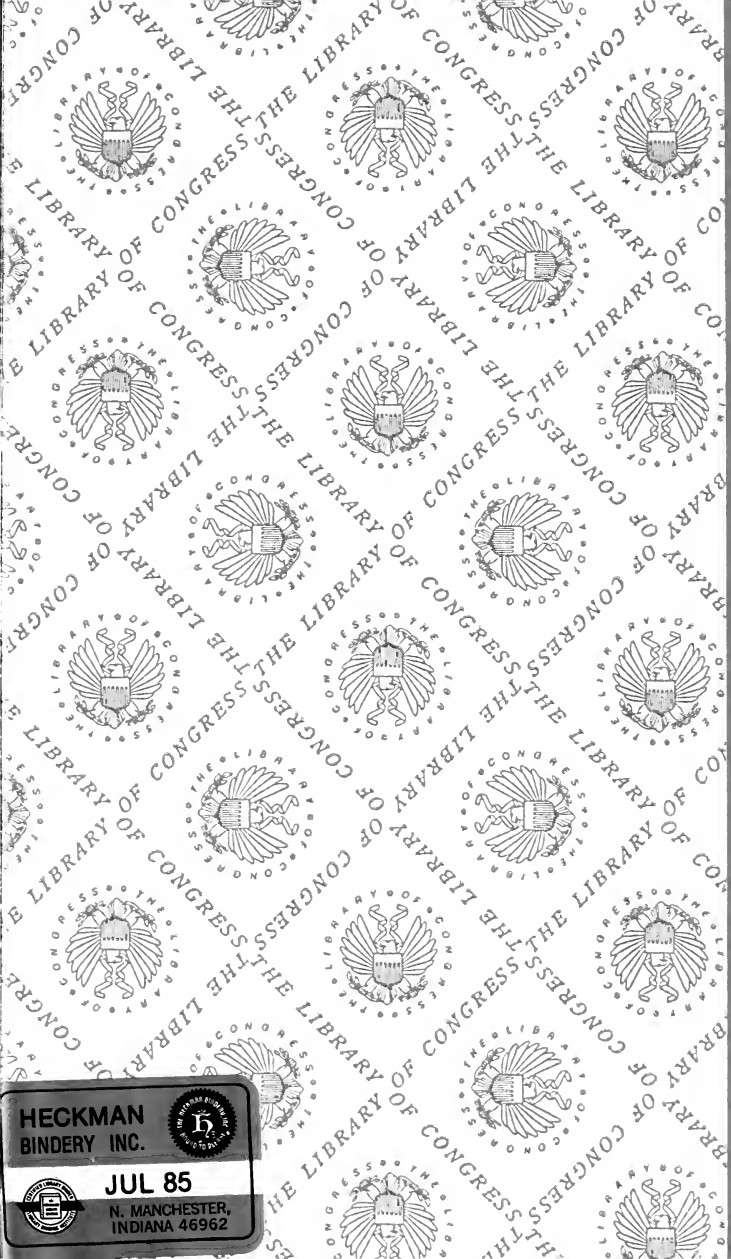
In " 121, " 4, for "abler," read, more dexterous.

In " 139, " 31, for "the battle," read, battle.

Handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is written in a cursive script and is partially obscured by the page's texture and the scanning process. It appears to be a list or a series of entries, possibly related to a collection or inventory.

[Faint, illegible markings]





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